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SKETCHES
INDIA;
OR,
OBSERVATIONS
DESCRIPTIVE OF THE SCENERY, &
IN
BENGAL:
WRITTEN IN INDIA,
IN THE YEARS 1811, 12, 13, 14;
TOGETHER WITH NOTES ON THE
CAPE OF GOOD-HOPE,
AND
ST. HELENA,

Written at those Places, in Feb., March, and April, 1815.

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P R E F A C E.

N_O nation on the face of the globe presents a wider field for speculation, or affords subject of more interesting enquiry, than the Hindoos. Divided into castes, or tribes, as was indubitably the characteristic of many nations in remoter times, we behold them in the present day what they were in the primeval ages, and what, in all human probability, they will ever remain.

The monotony pervading every custom of this singular people, although it may seem to afford but little scope to curiosity, is in reality the circumstance which seizes with increased interest on the astonishment and admiration of a stranger : for who can contemplate the sad reverses to which their ancient greatness and prosperity have been subjected, without being struck with the immutability which during a

lapse of ages has prevailed through their religion and the institutions connected with it ?

The Cape of Good Hope is interesting to the naturalist, botanist, and more especially so to the philanthropist. If in his sketch of the original Qua-Quees, or present Hottentots, the writer should be deemed in any way successful, he shall consider himself as amply repaid for his exertions. •

St. Helena, at the present moment, excites curiosity. It is, however, so small an island, as to admit of a very brief description ; and the writer has preferred giving a general account of it, to filling many pages with uninteresting minutiae.

These observations, invariably written on the spot which gave them birth, are the substance of a mere journal, and with few exceptions, have never been revised nor corrected : it is trusted they will be received with indulgence, and escape criticism.

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SKETCHES OF I N D I A.

CHAP. I.

Leave Calcutta.—Scenery of Bengal.—The Banyan-tree.—Of Plassey.—Moorshedabad.—Munny Begum.—Island of Cossimbazar.—Hills of Rajmahal.—Remains of the Nuwabs' Palaces.—Mr. Cleveland. Boglipoor.—Monghir.—Patna.—Remarks on the growth of Opium.—Buxar.—Gazypoor.—Jionpoor.

ON Monday the 24th of June 1811, I left Calcutta, in a budgerow* of sixteen oars, to visit the Upper Provinces of Bengal.

* *Budgerows* are the common passage-boats of the Ganges. They are more to be preferred for accommodation than

gal. The tide favoured at midnight, and I was soon launched on the Hooghly, a branch of the far-famed Ganges. On the morning of Tuesday, the 25th, anchored at Barrackpore, distant from Calcutta about fifteen miles ; this place is deservedly held to be, as to situation, extremely pretty. It is a large military station ; which circumstance, with its proximity to Calcutta, renders it gay and pleasant. A small indifferent house, with a large park attached to it, is conspicuous as the country seat of the governor-general. The house erected by Lord Wellesley exists as a mere trifle of what was intended, had he not been restricted in expense ; but the park, well stocked with deer, and possessing a menagerie of wild beasts, is, for Bengal, really beautiful.

In approaching Barrackpore from Calcutta,

safety, being flat-bottomed and rudely steered, by the *manjee* or head man, who stands at the stern, with a long bamboo for a rudder.

cutta, a stranger will remark its singularity of prospect. The right side of the river presents Barrackpore, its numerous and tasty edifices ; while the left displays to view the Danish settlement of Serampoor, and this so near that half an hour will transport from one to the other. Thus should an entire stranger arrive, he would imagine it a city built on both sides of the river ; though, did he look for a Rialto, he would alas, find but a Dingey ! Between this and the city of Moorshedabad, there is little to detain the traveller. The former settlements of the French at Chandernagore, and the Dutch at Chinsurah, may serve, indeed, to fix a momentary attention ; and their appearance, in evincing how all our rival influence has declined on the Hooghly may cause him anxiously to enquire, of what probable duration will be the government that has survived it !

In sailing on the Cossimbazar river, which conducts to the memorable village of Plassey, the cantonments of Burhampoor, and the large city of Moorshedabad, one will often pause and contemplate the rich expanse of country which on either side surrounds him. Plantations of rice and indigo, bounded only by the river, attest the fecundity of the soil ; while multitudes of mud huts, thatched with straw, and designated villages, in evincing the poverty, are, at the same time, the surest testimonies of a contented and peaceful peasantry.

The river fails not to enhance the grateful sensations ; at once wide, clear, and meandering through a luxuriant vegetation. Bengal Proper affords, by its general level, little or no diversity of prospect, the attention therefore is wholly solicited to its fertility. The graceful palm, the areca and the banyan-tree will almost ever be one's companions in Bengal. The former gradually
disappears,

disappears, giving way to the more hardy shrubs of the north. But the burgot, *ficus Bengaliensis*, or Indian banyan-tree, affords continual scope to the pen of the observer and pencil of the artist. This singular tree presents, by the extent of the ground it often covers, a very uncommon appearance. The greater part of its branches stretching horizontally from the trunk, become in time too heavy for their support. The fibres which these branches, in turn, emit, soon inclining downward, by degrees take root, and become as large in diameter as the trunk itself. For it is obvious, that as soon as the fibres reach the ground, they are no longer dependant on the trunk for support, but derive it naturally from the soil.

Thus, I have not unfrequently observed the trunk dead and decayed, while the sprouts, to which it communicated life and nourishment, have extended for one

or two acres, in fine large trees, around the parent stem. But, as it is not to be supposed that all the fibres which are sent forth succeed in reaching the ground, more especially when the branches which emit them happen to be at a great distance, those that do not, or wither in their descent, hang around the trunk and from its branches in so many long strings, giving the whole tree a very wild and singular aspect. They are common in all parts of India.*

On my near approach to Plassey, I naturally indulged in all those rapturous sensations which the proximity of a spot consecrated to fame must ever elicit. It was here, I said, or thought, the immortal Clive first permanently established his country's interest in India. It was here the Nuwuabs
of

* Malda was long famous for one of the largest banyan-trees; and in many parts of the country they cover a space of ground considerably exceeding two acres.

of Bengal learnt to tremble at European valour;* and, in the treachery of their ministers, to ponder on the corrosive cares of royalty. I had traced in my mind the positions of the several camps and armies, ere I discovered that the field of battle no longer existed ! The encroachments of the river have obliterated every trace ; and a few miserable huts, literally overhanging its banks, are all that remain of the celebrated Plassey !

The populous city of Moorshedabad, the ancient metropolis† of Bengal, and the residence of its present Nuwuabs, has little, save situation, to recommend it; and more interesting objects to me, than either this,

B 4

or

* The treachery of the Nuwuab's minister caused, in some measure, the battle of Plassey. He however, hesitated in action ; and it was not until victory declared in our favour, that he abandoned the Nuwuab.

† Subsequently to Gour, of which ancient capital the ruins still exist.

or the flowered silks for which it is famous, were the palace and the shrivelled arm* of her highness the Begum Munny, renowned by the mighty eloquence of Burke, which like to a torrent, when, falling from a summit, it glides imperceptibly through an extent of country, diffusing beauty and luxuriance around; this second Theodora,† from the precarious, although, in India, not infamous,‡ situation of a prostitute, was elevated to the rank of a princess, and, as such, ever received from Warren Hastings (that victim of faction and malevolence,)

* The *purdah*, or curtain, which secludes the ladies of the east from every one's view, except that of their lord, admits only the hand and arm being seen, which receives the usual *nuzer*, or present. Munny Begum is since dead.

† See the admirably-drawn character of the wife of Justinian, in the "Decline and Fall."

‡ *Fair-traders*, is the appellation by which this kind of people are known in India. Every person of rank has a set, or more, of them in pay, for the purpose of dancing,

lence,) the attention her good fortune, not birth, entitled her to.

The palaces, mosques, and bazars of Moorshedabad, proclaim its pristine grandeur and extent; and its riches, populousness, and turbulency, will justify the extensive cantonments established, nine miles off, at Burhampoor.

The island of Cossimbazar, noted for its silk, coarse hosiery, and inimitable ivory-work, is, generally speaking, a wilderness, inhabited only by beasts of prey.

At twelve or fourteen miles from Burhampoor, an almost impervious jungle* extends for many coss,† defying entrance to all but the sportsman, who seeks it for tigers.

* Jungle is applied either to a forest of wood, or high grass. In Bengal, a forest partakes commonly of both.

† I never heard the plural of this word used in India; but it has been frequently adopted in Europe. The distance of a coss ought to be a mile and a half, though they differ widely in various parts of the country.

tigers. But Jungeypoor, which is the chief repository for silk, amply counterbalances this deficiency of cultivation; and the commercial residency of the island has ever been reputed a certain source of wealth to its possessor.

The Rajemal hills, as contradicting the general level of Bengal, are extremely interesting, although at Siclygully,* the boundary of the forest, they are probably surveyed with regret rather than satisfaction. The valleys lying between, and the acclivities of these hills, are covered with forests of trees, high grass, and brushwood, the haunts of innumerable wild elephants, rhinoceroses, tigers, and buffaloes.

At the considerable village of Rajemal, I went on shore, to visit the ruins, which still subsist, of the palaces of the

Nuwuabs

* The famous pass of Siclygully, through these hills, is remarkable. The extraordinary calibre of its gun, too, has not been a little noticed.

Nuwuabs of Bengal. They stretch some distance on the banks of the Ganges. A marble pavilion is the only habitable part which has outlived the encroachments of the river, the fire of Dura,* and the decay of time. Its prospect, of the hills on the left, and a champaign, rich in cultivation, and intersected by the Ganges, in front, causes it to be much resorted to by the medley of voyagers on the Ganges.

These hills, until of late years, were much infested by a people bordering on savages; a race, who, secure in their mountains, issued from them at pleasure, plundering and murdering unfortunate travellers. The name of Cleveland† is still dear to every European and native of Bengal. By his humanity and condescension, he

* Son of Shah Jehan, and brother of Aurungzebe. He fled to Rajemal for protection, and by some means the palace caught fire.

† This gentleman was collector of Boglipoor.

he effectually civilized these savage tribes. Without fear, he entrusted his person amongst them, visited their habitations; and to him is the government indebted for as fine a regiment, formed solely of these Puharrees, or inhabitants of the hills, as there is in its service. Near Bogli-poor, I had the satisfaction of observing an elegant cenotaph erected to the memory of this exalted character which does honour to human nature.

On leaving Bengal, and entering the province of Bahar, one is instantly struck with the dissimilarity. In exchanging the humid flats, the marshes, and stagnant water, with which Bengal Proper abounds, for the elevated soil, dry atmosphere, and bracing air of Bahar, I was equally surprised and pleased. The natives, even, of the two provinces, partake of the difference; and in the application of Bengalee, as the keenest epithet of derision and
contempt,

contempt, we distinctly recognize the proud superiority of the latter.

An object of attention, which must excite peculiar interest in every honourable mind, is the thefts and depredations which are apt to be committed at every bazar, or market, and, indeed, whenever opportunity offers, both by your own servants and the boatmen. Astonishing as this may seem, it is an undoubted fact, that these people pillage every step they take; and, to escape the just indignation of the sufferers, shelter themselves under the name of their innocent master; to whom these poor wretches are often afraid to refer. No one can be too severe in the precautions necessary to prevent such measures. For myself, I never permitted a single person to be absent without permission, and was always careful that his return should be marked with a promptitude which rendered
him

him incapable of robbing. Though even this was sometimes ineffectual, and it was not until I had severely punished one or two, that they refrained from these infamous practices.

Monghir, which I reached on the twenty-fourth, is prettily situated. It is famous for its iron-work and coarse cutlery. The fort, in which the Europeans reside, embraces a fine prospect. The river runs in front, while a chain of mountains close the rear. It is an invalid station, and is much frequented for the salubrity of its air. Beyond Monghir, remarked the hot spring of Seita Kund; it possesses, as I was informed, no medicinal qualities, though much considered by the natives. Its temperature was sufficiently hot to boil an egg, and no water is more prized for a sea-voyage. It has been found, on repeated trials, to remain, for several years, in bottles, as sweet
and

and good as when first taken, from the spring. Near it are two tanks, or ponds, quite cold.

The constant labour and fatigue the *dandies*, or rowers, of a budgerow undergo, excites, at first, pity and astonishment in the breast of a stranger. For hours together, when the wind happens to be unfavourable, they are plunged up to their necks in water, under a burning sun, dragging the boat along with ropes. On the shore, they pass, ten or twelve in a string, working like horses. For the whole day they remain thus, nor does their labour terminate until the anchor is given at sunset. With what glee do they then eat their simple meal ! Every thing is forgotten, and they rise, at day-break, to a renewal of this slavery, with all the content possible. To a European, one of their days would be death. To sustain it, as these helpless creatures do, is scarcely credible.

Patna,

Patna, a largely-populated city, and the capital of Bahar, famed for the manufacture of opium, linen of all kinds, and wax candles, is situate three days journey from Monghir. An extensive trade is carried on with most parts of the country, in the above mentioned articles.

It is pretty generally known, that the trade of opium, which is solely cultivated in the districts of Bahar and Benares, has been monopolized by the government. On the justice and benefits of such a measure I pretend not to decide; but shall merely remark, that the natives, under the present system, are so little inclined to grow the weed, that not all the liberal advances which are offered, if they are not distrained upon for rent, will ever induce them to plant their land with poppy. It is therefore pretty evident (and I speak from one year's careful and diligent enquiry), that the advantages the cultivators are offered do not

surpass,

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surpass, even if they equal, those accruing to them from crops of mulberry, sugar-cane, or cotton.

I trace this reluctance to three causes :—first, the expense and labour attendant on preparing land for the seed ;—secondly, the number of people required to collect the opium, by making incisions in the capsule of each poppy at night, and collecting the juice in the morning ;—and thirdly, the cultivation always requiring the richest soil, and, in return, considerably impoverishing it for other tillage. These, and the many penalties prescribed on all who are discovered infringing the monopoly, intimidate the generality of the ryots from having any concern with opium.*

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The

* The partiality of the natives for this intoxicating drug sharpens their ingenuity, and to conceal their traffic in it they will often resort to the most singular artifices. Whilst I was at Patna, a cartload of hollow bamboos, compleatly filled with opium, was seized by three government peons, each of whose diligence was rewarded by a thousand rupees,

The cantonments of Dinapoor are at the distance of seven coss. The air there is fine, quarters good, and provisions remarkably cheap.

On Monday, March 2, 1812, left Dinapoor, and proceeded towards Jionpoor. As I travelled *dawk*,* which though perhaps not the most comfortable, is certainly the most expeditious mode of journeying in India, I was not surprized to find myself at Buxar, the distance of which from Dinapoor is not less than ninety miles, on the morning of the next day.

Buxar is known in history as being the point to which Lord Clive conquered, with his handful of heroes.—It was here that, more sated with glory and conquest than
depressed

* This means travelling in a palanquin, with relays of bearers every seven miles. Their general rate of going is four miles an hour.

depressed by unexampled fatigues, and exertions, he stopped, having pointed out a safe and easy road to the entire subjugation of Hindostan. The fort was formerly of consequence, and capable of resistance,—at present it is a secondary consideration : and the place itself has now dwindled into an invalid station.

From Buxar to Gazypoor is twelve coss. It is celebrated for the manufacture of rose-water, great quantities of which are dispatched to all parts of India, and produce considerable profit. The country around is very romantic. Fields of roses and poppies are every where to be seen ; the contrast arising from which is pleasingly increased by the dark green of the mimosa, and the purple tints of the luxuriant harebell.

Mr. Sweedland, the commercial resident, has an elegant habitation about a mile from

the town. I spent a day with him, and viewed the whole process of making the utter. February and March are the only two months in which a proper degree of cold prevails for producing it. The roses are then gathered, and sold to the resident, who, after employing many hands in plucking their stalks, has them distilled. As much as may be distilled is then placed in broad earthen pots, and allowed to remain all night in the open air. A fine cloth covers the pots, to exclude insects. In the morning, small drops of oil are distinctly perceived floating on the surface of the water, which being taken off with a feather, and put into a bottle, after standing a short time, the residua collects at the bottom, and the pure utter is then drawn off into another vial. Such is the simple process of producing this exquisite perfume. The roses are sometimes distilled more than
once ;

once ; but every succeeding distillation lessens, of course, the value and quality of the rose-water.

Jionpoor is full eighty miles from Gazyppoor, and, altogether, a tedious and uninteresting journey. It is a large and troublesome district. The town itself, although populous, comprising about 60,000 souls, is mean and ill-looking. It has an extensive fort ; which, in former times, must, I doubt not, have been considered of great importance. It is now little better than a heap of ruins. Asiatic jealousy is strikingly evinced in the erection of this fort. The zenanas are here all under ground, and so constructed as to receive light from above, without a possibility of any of their inhabitants being seen. A person who, after this, could have obtained a peep at the jetty damsels, must have out-argused Argus.

The natives pride themselves much on a bridge erected by Khan-Khanan* over the river Goomty, which flows through the town. They consider it as one of the seven wonders ; and though, to an European who has seen Black-friars, Westminster, &c. it appears but as an inferior concern ; yet to the Hindoo, who has not such another in his country, it is certainly an object of magnitude. Thus, all native letters, addressed to Jionpoor, are sure to be distinguished by a draught of a bridge, not very neatly executed in general, on the exterior. The mosque, or rather what was one, will reward the attention of the curious visitor of Jionpoor. Its height is one hundred feet, constructed entirely of stone. No wood is to be seen ; and on entering it
one

*I shrewdly suspect this Khan-Khanan, or Lord of Lords, to be no other than the great Abul-Fazul ; for I know of no other prime minister that Acbar had.

one is as much surprised with the magnitude of the structure, as the solidity of its materials.

A little to the westward of this district, exists a race of people called Raj-kumars ; descendants of the ancient Hindoo princes. They are remarkable as being the only caste I ever heard of in India, among whom female infanticide is common. So lofty are the ideas they entertain of their ancestors, and of their own importance, acquired by descent, that they consider it highly derogatory for their females (from whom alone, in the opinion of the Hindoo, disgrace can proceed) to contract alliances with any other tribe. For this reason, it is their invariable practice, on the birth of a female, to poison it with milk and opium ; and so well understood is this by the women who officiate as midwives, that I was assured, by a most respectable Brahmin, that frequently the first intimation the fa-

ther received of the birth, was that of his child having swallowed the potion.

To us, it appears singular that such a distinction should subsist between the males and females ; and that, as the former must necessarily intermarry with other castes, or their race become extinct, they should hesitate in preferring women of their own tribe. But besides the smallness of their numbers, and the difficulty of sparing merely sufficient females for the propagation of their race, it is from the marriage of their daughters alone that these descendants of their princes can be disgraced : —and, however low may be the election of the father, the son of a Raj-kumar is early impressed with the pride of birth, and the hereditary distinctions peculiar to his caste,

CHAP. II.

Of Benares.—Rammaghur.—Allahabad.—Chunar.—Mirzapoor.—Currah.—Manicpoor.—Visit the Ruins of Kanoge, the ancient Palibothra.—Futteyghur.—Bareilly.—Anopsheher and Meerut.—Begum Sumroo.—Sahranpoor.—Sketch of Hurdwar and the adjacent Country.

ON the eighteenth of March I departed for Benares, which city, as being reputed the most holy in India, and in whose praise fame has trumpeted so much, I was of course anxious to behold. I arrived at Secrole,* the residence of all the Europeans, at eight in the morning; and was here shown the houses of the ill-fated Cherry and intrepid Davis.† The former is now

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used

* Secrole is about a couple of miles from Benares. •

† The former of these gentlemen officiated as political resident at the city of Benares. On the deposition of Vizir

used as a court by the circuit judges; and the spiral staircase, on which the latter so gallantly defended himself, has, I understand, been since taken away by a late inhabitant.

The next morning, at five, I set off for Benares, and at sun-rise ascended one of the lofty minarets, so conspicuous in this city. These minars, the same which Aurungzebe, in his bitter hatred of idolatry, erected on the ruins of a Hindoo temple, are a kind of towers, with a spiral staircase in the inside. They are generally affixed as
wings

Ali from the throne of Oude, he was involved in the general massacre of the Europeans meditated by that usurper. Mr. Cherry was however the only victim:—for the opportune arrival of a troop of cavalry from the adjacent station of Sultanpoor, frustrated every other intention of the barbarian.

Vizir Ali, who was soon after taken, has ever since been confined under one of the bastions in Fort William, where, it is most probable, he will end his infamous life.

wings to the mosques of the Moslems, for the Imam to proclaim the hour of prayer. From it I had a most extensive and diversified prospect, at once overlooking the whole city—the Ganges winding slowly at its feet, with Secrole and a finely wooded country in the back ground. The myriads of people crowding to the holy *gauts* to bathe, some swimming about, and others preparing to do so; the unusual hum of voices, with the discordant sound of their musical instruments, as their notes floated on the air; the strange appearance of temples, which line the very banks, and literally encroach on the water, together with the lofty houses of this extensive city, present a scene new and various, as it is lively and amusing.

The streets of Benares are so extremely narrow, that I frequently touched both sides with my hands as I passed in the palanquin. The immense population that swarms in
them,

them, the number of Brimha's bulls* that infest every part, and their dirty and dusty state, afforded me the correct ideas of the city. It struck me at once as a spot of the grossest superstition; the dwelling of an avaricious and designing priesthood, and in which every vice is perpetrated, under the mask of religion.

Immediately opposite Benares, on the other side of the river, stands the Rajah's palace of Ramnaghur, where, at the instigation of that refractory zemindar, Cheyt-Sing, the British officers were wantonly murdered; a circumstance which, together with

* These bulls, considered the peculiar favourites of Brimha, of which, were a man to injure one, he would stand in danger of his life, are objects of idolatry to the Hindoos. They stroll at pleasure about the streets. Nor does a poor devil of a shopkeeper, on the animal's pushing his head into his shop, and devouring grain or any thing he may take a fancy to, dare to commit such a sacrilege as to drive him away.

with the increasing disturbances, caused the injured Hastings to seek shelter in the fort of Chunar.

At no other period, either before or since, has our footing in India rested so wholly on opinion as it did at this juncture. The natives themselves, are well aware of this—and, in 1814, I have frequently conversed with the Brahmins on our precarious government of 1781. To Warren Hastings they invariably attribute its present stability; and never was severer, or more vulgar, abuse exhausted in Westminster-hall, in defence of the basest measures, than I have heard vented in Benares, against his unrelenting persecutors. The palace, three or four stories high, is proportionably large, with extensive gardens, and spacious steps descending to the river.

The fort of Chunar, which I reached on the 15th, is built on a rock of free-stone.

stone. It commands the Ganges, and though little able to resist artillery, must have been a formidable defence against horse and matchlocks, of which the native armies more commonly partook. Few spots are more sickly; the rock reflecting the sun's rays with a fierceness almost intolerable. It is however assigned as a station to invalid pensioners; though whether for this very reason (as has obtained so much credit among the army) I cannot determine.

On the 17th at Mirzapoor, a large and well populated city, famed for its manufacture of carpets. Visited Tarrah, at the distance of three coss from the city: where are cantonments for a native battalion. A waterfall is the only attraction. I visited it in a deluge of rain, and do not think it exceeds fifty-feet. It is twice broken by craggy rocks, and then empties itself into a basin, hollowed by its powers, in the bottom of a romantic valley.

September

September 1, 1812. At Allahabad. The fort commenced by Acbar, and finished by his successors, is built at the confluence of the rivers Ganges and Jumna. For size it will probably bear competition with any, either in Europe or Asia :—but extent must ever cause a deduction from strength ;—and when we remark, that the fort of Allahabad is, like to Chunar, merely defensible against matchlocks, we shall survey its numerous squares with less satisfaction, and admit, with a smile, that its superior value is comprized in its sanctity.

The tax collected on Mahratta pilgrims, who resort annually to bathe at the conflux of the sacred streams, is very considerable ; and the subterraneous caverns, which are said to extend to Delhi, and in which part of the ceremonies are performed,—by almost suffocating, will soon satisfy the curiosity of a stranger.

It

It is well known that this province was one of the fairest jewels which the policy of Marquess Wellesley seized from the crown of Oude, in 1804. The then reigning Nuwuab, Asoph ul Doulah, weak and childish as he was, well knew how to appreciate the value of the province he was urged to sacrifice. For a long time he refused to listen to the propositions of the British government on this head ; and it was only from the intimations of the Governor General that he should issue the necessary orders, unsanctioned by the Nuwuab, for his subjects to pay their rents into the British treasury, not without practising, at the same time, on the terrors of the prince for his personal safety, that he was induced to yield. Even then, with tears streaming from his eyes, he called Mahommud to witness his reluctance ; and pathetically deplored, that after such an act of self-degradation,

dation, he should be unable, without shame, to appear in the presence of his subjects. This may possibly have been one of those few instances in which honesty and policy are deemed inconsistent with each other. The tomb and gardens of Sultan Chuseroo, near Allahabad, are fine, and merit observation.*

Soon after leaving Allahabad, the towns of Currah and Manicpoor greatly engrossed my attention. Two hundred years have scarcely elapsed, since the cities of which I now speak, under the reign of the mighty Achar, subsisted in a state of splendour, of which their present decayed and miserable condition can furnish no idea. They were both the residence of the Soubahs (or viceroys), who administered the
D
government

* From Allahabad to considerably beyond Caunpoor, the territory of Nuwab Vizir of Oude extends, running parallel with that of the Company to the right of the river.

government of the provinces after which they are named. As extensive soubahdaries, they were entrusted to the most powerful and faithful subjects; and in the riches and splendour which ever accompanies exalted rank in India, Currah and Manicpoor rose gradually to be cities of the first magnitude and importance in the empire.

When Acbar changed the seat of government from Currah to Allahabad, these riches flowed of course into another channel. The nobility attached to the court removed, with their attendants, all those minor springs of wealth which are divided, more particularly, among the bulk of the people; and from being, as it were, the centre of attraction, these cities soon became deserted and decayed. It is unnecessary to trace them further. In the east, when once the hand of time is suffered to appear, decay is too rapid to admit of much consideration

ration. The rains, the encroachments of rivers, all conspire to destroy; and the *Ficus Indicus*, or peep̄le tree,* with its embowering shade, quickly conceals from view the mouldering remnants which may still exist.

On the 15th of September, I visited the ruins of Kanoge, now generally supposed to be the Palibothra of the ancients;† and of which Quintus Curtius, in his marvellous description of Megasthenes's embassy, would have us entertain the grandest ideas. However little we may credit the general descriptions of this elegant, though incorrect writer, however we may observe that he aims more at surprising than convincing his readers, still it is certain, that of Kanoge, its ancient extent and

D 2 magnificence,

* The peep̄le-tree is seen in almost every old building in Bengal. Its seed, carried by the birds, is frequently dropped in singular situations. I have often remarked a fine specimen springing from the dome of a ruinous mosque.

† See Rennell's Memoir of his Map of Bengal.

magnificence, we have the most satisfactory proofs.

This city, so long the capital of Hindostan, was built by one of the Su-rajahs, which dynasty commenced about 1072 years before the christian era, and lasted two hundred and eighty-six years.* The circumference of its walls are said to have been near one hundred miles.

The historians of Mahmood I., in describing this prince's eighth expedition into India, add of 'Kanoge,' "He there saw a city which raised its head to the skies; and which, in strength and structure, might justly boast to have no equal."*

Kanoge stood formerly on the banks of the Ganges; but the encroachments of the river on the opposite side† have been so great, and its course so irregular, as to be
now

* See Dowe's Hindostan.

† Was it not that the Ganges lost on one side what it gained on the other, and that its secession equals its advancement, the whole of Bengal would be a sheet of water.

now full two English miles from it. The ruins of Kanoge are interesting and extensive, and the place which now bears its name very populous. Around are strewed what were once monuments of its riches, its luxury, or ingenuity. Here the pillar of a temple to Vishnu, or Mahadeva,* its shaft and capital still entire—There the ruinous monument of some Faquir, whose sanctity has probably out-lived the perishable materials of his tomb. On all sides the luxuriant grass is seen entwining in places that once were holy; that were once, perhaps, the dwellings of kings; and where we all have read, that mirth, riot, and festivity formerly prevailed. Such is Kanoge; the Palibothra of the ancients:—a strand of ruins; the seat of silence, poverty, and decay

AD 3

October.

* Brimha, Vishnu, Mahadeva or Suva, three forms of the same and the same godhead. See, Sir. W. Jones on the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India

October 3d.—This morning reached Futteyghur, an ancient place, the metropolis of the Patans.* It now possesses little of its former dignity. Since its cession to the British government, the nominal Nuwuab has been allowed a salary of nine thousand rupees a month, exclusive of a large establishment paid by the Company. Notorious as this province formerly was for the badness of its police, it cannot but afford subject of congratulation to all travelling at present through it, to witness its improved condition. On the Nuwuab's ceding it to our government, its state was so disgraceful, that murders and robberies were perpetrated, daily almost, within the precincts of Furruckabad. Its revenues could never be collected, and the refractory zemindars found their interest in this wretched state of the province. By the
cession

* A name given to the Afghan emperors of Hindostan.

cession of his territories the Nuwuab is in fact a great gainer. It is true he may apparently have sacrificed, in some degree, his independence; but, in reality, the revenue he now enjoys, divested of every care, must, one would think, amply compensate for the sovereignty he relinquished over a turbulent and discontented people.

Furruckabad is noted for the manufacture of chintzes, and dosooty, a coarse kind of cloth, used generally in India for tents, in the place of canvas.

From Futteyghur, on the 8th of October, I crossed the Ganges, and entered the country of the Rohillas, prosecuting, with as much expedition as circumstances would admit of, my journey towards Bareilly, its capital. The inhabitants of this fine country, like to all mountaineers, are brave and courageous. For many years they obstinately resisted every endeavour of the Nuwuabs of Oude to enslave them;

and it was only by dint of British aid that they were finally subdued, at the decisive battle of Cutterah, in 1774. Rohilcund is with justice characterized as the garden of India. Its appearance, when contrasted with that of any other part of the country, is very captivating. The whole route, from Cutterah, to Bareilly, is one champaign of smiling cultivation. The sugar-cane, the mulberry, and the cotton-shrub, are seen in extensive plantations in every direction. Through these paths are cut, bordered by flowers peculiar to the soil; and indeed no gardens in India present a more pleasing appearance than do some of the highly cultivated parts of Rohilcund.

Bareilly is an ancient city, of great extent, but in a decayed and ruinous condition. The cenotaph of Hafey Rhamut, a Rohilla chief, who was slain at the battle of Cutterah, struck me as being the only object worthy notice :—and even this is only interesting

teresting as connected with the fate of one of their most distinguished princes. The city was ever esteemed of considerable consequence by the native powers ; and the command of its fort, which is merely tenable against horse and matchlocks, was usually assigned by the princes of Oude to their sons or brothers.

The field of battle at Cutterah is still distinguished by a few scattered tombs, in which the piety or superstition of survivors place lamps at night to betoken their regret. The small niches, cut purposely in their monuments, assist this fanciful resolution : and the tomb of a Mahometan, deprived of the nightly lamp, speaks volumes, as to the poverty or indifference of his friends

My stay at Bareilly was short, and by the route of Owlah and Alligunge I arrived, on the morning of the 24th of October, at Anophsheher. This town, which,
it

it is to be regretted, is enclosed by a mud wall, was formerly of importance, and not long since was the boundary of the British dominion in India. From the fort, which is of brick, some sweet prospects are to be obtained. The Ganges is seen meandering repeatedly through the fertile plains of Rohilcund; the sugar-cane rises, in all its luxuriance, on its banks; and if, in the mid-day heat, when in India a kind of rest seems to be allotted to nature, aught occurs to disturb the stillness of the scene, it is only the singing of the boatmen, or the waves that clash against the pebbled shore. I visited the fort at the hour described, and the thermometer, which ranged at 136 in the sun, warned me of the folly I had committed in doing so.

October the 27th, 1812. This morning at nine o'clock reached Meerut, the seat of the second division of the field army, and perhaps the largest, gayest, and pleasantest

pleasantest of the upper stations in Bengal. Like many others, the decline of this city may be dated from the success of Nadir Shah, who besieged it in person. It was formerly surrounded by a fine brick wall, the remains of which are still to be seen; but unfortunately, instead of adding to its beauty, they serve but to render more conspicuous its fallen state. The natives, for those dilapidations which time has wrought in it, have supplied mud; and it now stands a miserable barrier, the one half brick, the other mud.

I was here introduced to her highness the Begum Sumroo*, so conspicuous a character

* As this lady chooses to pass for a christian, and a Roman catholic, adopting all European customs, I was spared a nuzr of five gold mohurs (80 rupees). There is much more to be lost than gained in visiting natives of rank in India: though this remark will gain little credit in England, where rifling Begums and pilfering Nuwuabs is the order of the day. However, one should never begrudge a few pounds to get an insight into the customs of a country.

ter in the late wars of Hindostan, and who was residing here* at the time of my arrival. I had many opportunities of seeing her. She is below the middle size, and somewhat corpulent : age (she cannot be less than seventy) has given her rather an interesting appearance ; but the hypocrisy displayed throughout the whole tenor of her life, her treachery in politics, and the strong reasons to suppose she connived at the murder of her former husband (Somers), are sufficient to efface any impressions of respect one at first sight may entertain for her. Her country in the Dooab† yields annually, I understand, about three lacs of rupees. She has five battalions of infantry, armed

* She has a palace at Saldanha, seven miles off ; and the most superb house in Delhi is exclusively hers.

† The Dooab means that part of the country lying between the river Ganges and Jumna. Dooab, literally translated, signifies two waters.

armed with matchlocks.* One of them is stationed here, and serves conveniently to discharge all disagreeable duties. They are quite an undisciplined rabble. Around Meerut I noticed many tumuli, the receptacles of the bodies of various Sirdars (or chiefs), who under Nadir-Shah, Ghoolam, Caudor, and Scindiah, have alternately devastated the Dooab, and turned this smiling country into a barren desert. Many of them are on a grand scale, and becoming the rank of the parties.

Meerut however has little to detain a traveller; and after a couple of months residence I left it, without regret, for Saharanpoor. My route lay through Muzaffernagur

* It was under Begum Sumroo's auspices that George Thomas commenced his military career. The princess and boatswain however soon disagreed; and George was so little awed by royalty as to set up for himself, and march against his ci-devant mistress. See Franklin's life of this extraordinary man.

na guraed Deobun, which struck me as having seen better days, and a few other inconsiderable villages.

On the morning of the 4th of February, 1813, I reached Sahranpoor. The snowy mountains of Tibet,* which divide Hindostan from Tartary, lay before me : the sun shone bright upon them, and the dazzling spectacle may be easier conceived than described. Between the first range of hills, which is distant only eighteen miles from Sahranpoor, and the second, which is about forty, lies the valley of the Goorkahs, forming part of the dominions of the Rajah of Nepaul. Between the second and snowy range, which rises pre-eminent above the rest, and which are distant nearly two hundred

* By a late measurement the altitude of these mountains is found to be considerably greater than that of the highest peak of the Andes, being 23,000 feet above the level of the sea.

hundred miles from Sahranpoor, a chaos of vast rocks and mountains appears to prevail. Even the camel is useless in these regions; and when, after crossing the Ganges, which flows at the foot of the second range, you ascend and look down on the pretty village of Colsee, the Oases* of upper Tibet, you are almost tempted to consider it enchantment.

Sahranpoor has a small fort, and cantonments for one native battalion. The town is ancient and rich; some of the oldest and most respectable Hindoo families having, since the prevalence of the British interest in the Dooab, adopted it as their residence.

I sojourned at Sahranpoor three months, and then, accompanied by a friend, prepared

* Oases are highly fertile spots, amidst wastes of sand. The largest is said to be the Ammonica, visited by Alexander. See Quintus Curtius.

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pared to visit Hurdwar, celebrated for its sanctity, the resort of innumerable pilgrims ; and more interesting to me as being the spot at which the Ganges first enters Hindostan.

We departed on the 2d of May, 1813, and reached Hurdwar on the 5th. It is here that the Ganges rushes with impetuosity between two ranges of hills which impend over it, and whose feet it washes into the plains below. Here a small stream, after receiving the waters of eleven rivers, many as large as the Rhine, and none smaller than the Thames, and after performing a circuitous course of more than two thousand miles, it falls into the sea a little below Sagor island. Who could have supposed that the stream I now contemplated formed a river on which I have often sailed in places eight miles broad? With all the reverence of the most holy Brahmin, I immersed within the sacred
water,

water, and could not have been ^{*} more refreshed, after partaking of the blessings of Ganga, had I, been one of her sincerest votaries.

May the 6th, at sun-rise, ascended the Chand-Puhar, or Mountain of the Moon, sacred to Mahadeva,* and on the top of which is erected, in stone, the image, and trident symbolical of his power. This mountain rises near a quarter of a mile above the surface of the earth. It is ascended with enthusiasm by the zealots of either sex; and a few shells or halfpence, the prescribed donation, suffice to support an aged woman who conducts them to its summit. Perhaps in no other part of India is there so wide, or so highly diversified a

E prospect

* His terrestrial haunts are the snowy hills of Himalaya, or that branch of them to the east of Brahma-putra which has the name of Chandra-Sichara, or the Mountain of the Moon.—*Sir W. Jones, on the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India.* •

prospect to be obtained. On the base of the image one may rest and eye the landscape, even to satiety. All that the fondest admirer of picturesque scenery could desire is here concentrated.

Beneath, the Ganges, meandering in innumerable directions, forming capriciously, at its pleasure, islands and peninsulas—here flowing with the utmost serenity, and reflecting each passing shadow on its silver waters—there, with an angry roar, rushing over stones which would vainly impede its progress, it proceeds furiously towards the sea. On its banks, immediately in front, the pretty town of Khunkul is conspicuous; its white stone houses,* and regularity of building, so widely different from the generality of Indian towns, carry back the imagination to England. The enthusiast

* Hurdwar abounds in quarries of stone, and the majority of houses are built solely of it.

thusiast will almost fancy the Ethiopian of a different colour: he will, in his mind's eye, substitute the independent English farmer for the pusillanimous Faquir;* and will only be recalled from his delirium by the blackened scorched-up appearance of the adjacent hills: they are opposite, on the other side of the river, stretching to the right; and at their feet is situated the small town of Hurdwar. Its lofty minars rise above the Ganges in simple elegance. They diversify the scene, and draw one's attention a little higher up the shore, to the sacred gauts of Gaeë, and Hirkee Pareë. Here, where crowds of deluded wretches adore the flowing stream, the coup-d'œil is striking. Men, women, and children, old and young, the priests of

E 2 Brahma,

* Beggars, who swarm at Hurdwar, like jackals on the banks of the Ganges.

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Brahma, and their credulous followers, mingled promiscuously together, cause a hum sufficiently great to rouse the contemplative stranger on the Chand-Puhar.* But I have done with Hurdwar, and its many beauties : though, before I take my leave, it is necessary to remark, that a large fair, is annually held here, to which multitudes, from all parts of India, resort †

Thus far have I prosecuted my travels one thousand four hundred miles distant from Calcutta, at once the boundary of Hindostan and the Company's influence. Further, few Europeans ever think of proceeding.

* Pretty generally corrupted to Chandee.

† Every fifteen years, an immense fair, called the Coom, takes place at Hurdwar. So great is the concourse of people assembled, from all parts of the world, that a friend of mine, among a variety of other coins, collected the ducat, the rouble, and piastre.

ceeding. Beyond, lies the mountainous country of the Goorkahs : a country little known,* and its inhabitants only in the first stages of civilization. They are governed by one sent by the Rajah of Nepaul, in whose extensive dominions this country is included. The excessive jealousy of the governor, who, for political reasons, is very cautious of admitting any European into his country, and the inimical disposition of the natives, are obstacles sufficiently powerful to deter the generality of persons from penetrating the mountains of Upper Tibet. However, as visiting the Goorkah valley was comprized in our plan, neither my friend nor myself cared much for the difficulties. Having accordingly provided elephants, horses, camels, tents, &c. we

E 3

wrote

* Since writing the above, the Company have acquired possession of this valley.

wrote to the governor for permission to enter the valley on a shooting excursion, resolving not to wait for a reply, but as soon as the request was dispatched to march into it without further ceremony. This we accordingly attempted, but sending our servants forward, were not a little surprised to find their passage opposed by a guard of soldiers.* Though accompanied by sipahees, yet as little credit was to be gained by disputing with men who were only performing their duty, we chose rather to be silent under this treatment, and the

* Just above the town of Hurdwar is the Beem-Ghora Pass, which leads into the Dehra-Doon, or valley of Dehra. About the middle of this pass, a guard of soldiers is stationed, the same which stopped our attendants. But, as I have before mentioned, the whole valley is now the Company's; it having been overrun in November 1814, although with the loss of Gen. Gillespie, and many other officers, who fell before the fort of Kalunga, and it is now ceded by treaty.

the same evening (May the 12th) struck our tents, and made a rapid march towards another part of his territory, about forty coss from Hurdwar, the pass of Cosserong, and which place, as we knew it to be unguarded, we could enter at unmolested.

CHAP III.

Entrance into the Ghoorkah Valley.—Sketch of the Hills and Country adjacent.—Suttee.—Trogodytes.—Sale of the Women of Upper Tibet.—Badshah Mahel.—River Jumna.—Panniput.

MAY the 14th, 1813.—Early this morning, commenced our entrance into the Goorkah country, by the gaut,* or pass, of Cosserong. This gaut cannot, I should think, be less than five miles long, on an ascent the whole way, and the road covered with stones. Our elephants proceeded with difficulty, and we agreed to encamp at about the middle of the pass. Our tents were pitched in one of the prettiest of situations. The hills, forming around us a complete

* It must be kept in mind, that *gaut* applies, indifferently, to a pass through mountains, and a flight of steps conducting to a river.

plete circle, were inexpressibly grand. They are covered with wood to their very tops, among which the tapering fir, a tree not to be seen in Hindostan, rises in groves on the summits and acclivities of these mountains. I had a large one cut down; it was as fine as any I have seen in Europe, and full of cones. The myriads of pea and jungle-fowl, of all kinds, which were in this natural enclosure, are not to be conceived; the calls of the former, and shrill crowings of the latter, re-echoed by the hills, had a fine effect.

On the 15th, struck our tents, at day-break, and proceeded unmolested through the valley, to the village of Sacoowalla, only fifteen coss from its capital, Debra. We had scarcely alighted from our elephants, when hirkarus* from the governor gave us to understand that our letters had

* Messengers.

had been 'perused, though without intimating in the least that it was his highness's wish we should proceed. The truth was, I believe, he was ashamed, after we had advanced so far, to order us back again. The messengers presented us with a species of root esteemed efficacious in many complaints, and of a most fragrant smell. On our route, from the pass to the village of Sacoowalla, no pen can do justice to the scenery which prevails in many parts. On the banks of the Songh, a pretty river which rises in these hills and empties itself into the Ganges, near Hurdwar, the views are fine. One sees the winding Songh,—hills, well wooded, to the left,—a green champaign in front,—and the snow-clad mountains of Tartary at a distance.

May the 16th.—We this day encamped within five coss of Dehra, in the midst of a rich, but little cultivated country. Black partridge, hares, quail, deer,
and

and every kind of game, we found in the greatest abundance. The valley is irrigated throughout with a multitude of small brooks, which render those parts that are cultivated very luxuriant, and the grass verdant.

One cannot but be greatly struck with its depopulated appearance. Within five coss of Dehra, the seat of government, had we counted each human being we had seen since first entering it, the number would not have exceeded thirty. This can only be attributed to the defects in its government. It appears that the governor, who is commonly changed every three or four years, receives no fixed salary for his services. We learnt, it is true, that the produce of a jaghire,* in Nepaul, is generally assigned each of them, during his absence, and that from thence he draws what money is required.

* An estate.

required.' But this communication was supported by no proofs, and its authenticity is very doubtful. However, supposing it to be the case, so irregular a system must ever produce rapacity in the ruler, and poverty in his subjects. It may, at once, give some idea of the government, the depopulated state of the country, and the inefficiency of the cultivation, when I state, that this valley of the Goorkahs, forty coss long and twelve broad, yields only an annual revenue of sixteen thousand rupees.*

May the 17th, reached Dehra, a short time after sun-rise, attended by a chobdar,

* The size and revenues of the valley are collected from the accounts of its best informed inhabitants; they allowed, that the revenue, formerly, exceeded a lakh. The Mahunt, or high-priest, was a Hindoo, of considerable information, and fortunately well disposed towards us. These people little thought they should, so soon, be subject to the Company.

dar,† sent by the governor to 'conduct us. It is singular to state, that the road became worse the nearer we approached the city : a striking evidence of its poverty, and want of trade and population.

At about three P. M. we were honoured with a visit from the governor, who, in a palanquin, accompanied by a numerous body-guard, with the chief people of his court, and followed by an immense crowd, came to pay his respects. Hirkarus being sent to inform us of his approach, we advanced to receive him, about a hundred paces in front of the tents. He, by his salute, at once, put us on an equality ; and we ushered himself and principal attendants into the tents.

He was an old man, and by no means of a prepossessing exterior. With much address, he eluded the several enquiries I put
to

† Chobdars are the bearers of silver sticks.

to him, 'respecting the productions, manufactures, government, disposition of the natives, and military strength of the valley; and I was sorry to observe, that without gaining the information required, I had considerably increased his jealousy. Having staid about half an hour, he wished to retire, when our presents, consisting of articles most likely to please him, a double barrelled gun, a pair of pistols, and many other trifles, were produced: he was so overjoyed, that I question whether he had ever before seen any European manufacture. Be this as it may, he loaded us with articles, in return, of little value, certainly, but all that his poverty could afford.* We should, the

* Among other presents, he gave us the animal, stuffed, which produces the fine Tibetan musk, and from which I afterwards cut out a large pod. It was almost grey, of about the size of a dog, with two long ivory tusks. We learnt, they were abundant in the mountains, and always taken in snares.

the next morning, have returned 'his visit, but were privately told that he did not wish us to see the fort. We consequently relinquished our intentions.

At Dehra little is to be seen. An extensive bazar, two Hindoo temples, and a fine tank, comprize the place. The fort* Nulla-Pance, or Kalunga, situated on a hill nearly five hundred feet high, lies four miles from the city. The jealousy of the governor would not allow of our seeing it ; but, from what I could learn, three guns comprehend its artillery, and seven battalions, the whole military strength of the country.

On the morning of the 20th, left Dehra, and proceeded three coss, as far as the village of Bhonkee. From hence we came to a determination to ascend the second

* Where poor Gillespie, and many others, fell in October, 1814.

cond range of Tibet hills, which lay before us. Having therefore left one tent at the village, and sent on another to be pitched as near to the foot of them as the camels could go, we set off, at five in the morning of the 21st, striking directly across the valley, and after encountering many difficulties (to be easily imagined by those who know what thick jungles, and no regular roads, are in India), after some hours fatigue, we arrived ; which had scarcely been effected, ere we were saluted by one of the most terrible hail-storms I ever recollect to have witnessed. In a moment we were wet to the skin ; and I was neither in a humour to admire the awful roaring of the thunder, as reverberated by the rocks, or the vivid lightning playing on their peaks. At eleven, the sun completely dried our clothes. The tent had not come up, nor did it make its appearance until five in the evening. We lay, this night,

on

on the ground, having no beds ; and the next morning, having provided a Puharree, or Resident of the Hills, as a guide, we prepared to ascend this second range of mountains. With incredible toil and difficulty, we succeeded ; climbing up rocks and precipices which seemed never before to have been visited by man. On foot (for here no kind of animal can go) we travelled five coss, or seven English miles and a half, and found ourselves in the very middle of the hills, surrounded by walnut-trees. Worn out with fatigue, we threw ourselves on the ground, and dined under one, whose spreading branches were loaded with fruit.

Many of these hills are cultivated to their summits, as, we are told, is the custom in China. They are divided into small patches, and regularly secured by ramparts of wood and stones ; and, being watered by springs issuing from the top ;

these hanging gardens present a striking and singular appearance.

Around Dehra, we had seen abundance of wild raspberries, and large bowls of them were brought to us each day we staid ; but, though excellent, they were inferior to the fruit found here. On them, and the barberries, which likewise abounded, we made a delicious repast ; and the bubbling stream, as pure as chrystal and as cold as ice, was preferred to wine. We found here the nettle ; and the many wild-rose and peach-trees growing in the hedges gave the most perfect idea of a European climate. At last, after loading the Puharree with walnuts, we set off, on our return home, and reached our tents exactly at eight o'clock.

It was in the middle of these hills of Upper Tibet, that, on the 24th of May, 1813, as I was contemplating the romantic scenery which on every side surrounded

surrounded me, my attention was caught by many rude piles of stones, four and five feet high, erected in the simplest manner. On a few of them moss had gathered and imprinted age and decay;—over others, the baubool* waved gently its spreading boughs. On inquiry, I learnt, they were monuments of suttees (or of women having burnt with the bodies of their husbands); that in these peaceful regions, where the Hindoo religion, unrestrained in the practice of its religious ceremonies, by Christian or Moslem, existed in all its original purity, they were very frequent; and that, would I remain a few days, I should have an opportunity of witnessing one. To me, who had beheld the various penances and mortifications which Eastern fanatics so delight in—who had seen them, at the Cherukh Poojah, with iron hooks

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thrust

* The Indian acacia, which produces the gum-arabic.

thrust into their backs, suspended on lofty bamboos, whirl through the air, and smile in agony—who had viewed them, at another festival, walk with indifference into the Ganges, and anxiously wait the coming of the alligators to devour them; mothers exulting in the loss of their children, and orphans bewailing the fate of their parents—who had witnessed wretches prostrate themselves before the carriage of their idol, their bones crushing as the wheels proceeded, causing each of us to shrink with horror from the sight—to me, who had beheld these, and many other equally shocking excesses, a suttee could not, as affording a wide field for speculation, as displaying the whole machinery of the soul wrought up to an unusual pitch, by the prospect of so cruel and voluntary a death, but prove of some consideration. We accordingly agreed to remain, and anxiously awaited the appointed day.

On

On the 27th it arrived. At ten in the morning the ceremony began. A pile of wood, about four feet and a half high, being previously erected, the mourner appeared, and having performed her ablutions in the Assan, a clear meandering stream which ran near, walked three times round the fatal pile, and taking a tender farewell of her family and friends, prepared for the last dreadful ceremony. She was a remote descendant of one of the hill princes ; and though too short for a fine form, had a fair and interesting countenance. Her natural beauty, heightened by her resolution, would have affected a heart of adamant. Her glossy black hair hung dishevelled on her shoulders ; and, attired in a yellow sheet (the garment of despair), this infatuated widow ascended the fatal pile. The noise of drums and other native instruments now became deafening. Placing the head of

her husband* in her lap, she sat, seemingly unconcerned, and with the continued exclamations of Ram, Ram,† witnessed the savage exultations of the Brahmins, as they eagerly applied torches to the pile. Ghee (clarified butter), and other inflammable substances, having been profusely spread on the lower parts of the wood, it ignited in an instant. Still was heard the cry of Ram, Ram : her chief ambition appeared to consist in invoking her god to the last. The flames had now ascended far above the sufferer, and her agony was very apparent in the agitation of the pile. But the Brahmins

* Under the Goorkah dynasty he had been an opulent zemindar : which description of people, in India, answers to our nobility, there being only one link betwixt the prince and peasant. In the subversion, however, of this dynasty, he had been reduced nearly to the level of a ryot.

† Ram, or Rama, the favourite deity of the Hindoo women.

mins immediately threw on more wood, and buried both bodies from our sight. I shall not attempt to paint the spectacle which presented itself on the flames being extinguished : it was truly horrible. Their ashes were collected and thrown into the Assan ; and shortly after, a pile of stones, similar to those before-mentioned, was erected on the spot where the suttee had taken place.

The custom of women burning with the dead bodies of their husbands is greatly on the decline, and one may now be many years in India without having an opportunity of witnessing it.* For although the British government does not actually pro-

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hibit

* The one described, and another at Benares, in 1814, (where the woman, pile and all, were enclosed in a kind of shed) are the only two I saw during my residence in Bengal. Indeed, the one at Benares was in a degree forced on me, for I never would have *visited* a second.

hibit the celebration of suttees, still every measure is resorted to, to prevent them; and the interference of the magistrate, to ascertain that the widow burns of her own free-will, as is strictly enjoined by government, and many other obstacles, thrown purposely in the way, serve greatly to discourage the practice. Mayhap too, in this respect, the Hindoo ladies are not *immutable*, but, observing with what composure our sweet countrywomen in the East submit to the loss of their better halves, are desirous of evincing, that at pleasure, they can be not at all inferior to them in the exercise of two such virtues as patience and resignation !

But the most extraordinary objects I witnessed in these mountains, were the Troglodytes, or dwellers in caves, with the natural excavations in which they resided. Often, while in the midst of savage nature, and surrounded by nearly inaccessible mountains,

mountains, have I been astonished by the appearance of these people, who, creeping from their holes, with small ladders of ropes, descend and mount, with rapidity, the most dangerous precipices.

I had, several times, the curiosity to enter these singular dwellings, formed and fashioned in the hard rock. In some I could stand upright, and take four or five steps each way.* The generality, however, were very small, and but miserably supplied the convenience of a hut. I found their inhabitants invariably civil. They are, I surmise, of the ancient Gymnosophists, or naked wanderers: not that all of them partook of this distinction, but that the generality bore a strong resemblance to this sect, of which the members are met with oftener in the northern parts of India than elsewhere.

* One of the most capacious is about half a mile from Hurdwar, entering the valley.

elsewhere. The natives will, however, assure you, that considerably further in the interior, they exist totally uncivilized ; and without entertaining the remotest idea of a God, or a future state, alternately live in trees or caves, crawl as beasts, and feed on roots and other spontaneous productions of the earth. But if the human species exist at all in so degraded a state (and I think it very doubtful), it surely cannot be in Tibet ; or, at least, if the remainder is in any way similar to the parts through which my friend and myself travelled. For, even in the midst of the second range of mountains into which we penetrated, large villages were frequent, and every thing bespoke civilization, if not much refinement. At one of these villages we left a silver muffineer, which had been brought with the provisions on which we dined : for the natives crowded around us in a very unpleasant and alarming manner. Their long,
black

black hair, hanging down their backs, gave them a savage appearance; and, as they seemed never before to have seen a European, and moreover spoke a language peculiar to themselves, we were not altogether at ease.

The sale of the beautiful women born in these hills forms a lucrative trade* to their relations and friends. Of matchless symmetry of body, and regularity of features, their countenances, in clearness and delicacy, rival those of Europeans. A hundred, and sometimes eighty rupees, will purchase a fine girl of twelve or fourteen,† just rising to maturity. Such have
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* It is thus that the harems of all natives of rank are supplied, though perhaps from other countries.

† Montesquieu has, I think (for I have him not before me), justified polygamy in the East, on the early maturity and speedy decay of female attractions; inferring that, were a man, as in Europe, to remain constant to one woman, he must necessarily, through the greater part of his life, be chained to a lump of deformity.

I often 'seen both bought and sold, even within the limits of the Company's provinces; and the jealous restrictions imposed on this traffic are easily eluded, by the joy of the slave to escape from a state of starvation and the bitterest distress, to the comforts, kind treatment, and superfluities attendant on European protection.

May 30th, re-entered the Company's territories through the Timley pass, and encamped at Badshah-Mahel, where are the ruins of one of Shah-Jehan's hunting seats. The river Jumna a few years since washed its walls; its bed is clearly discernible, although, at present, this vagrant stream is not within a mile of the place. A short distance from Badshah-Mahel, the river Jumna is seen entering India from the hills. Unlike the Ganges, it comes tumbling through a cleft, from about the height of twenty feet; and, by the clearness of its waters, the beauty of its cascade, and so-

porous

norous music, engages the attention of a stranger.

From Sahranpoor, in the month of August, 1813, I crossed the Jumna, to Kurnowl, a military cantonment, and seat of the third division of the field-army, distant only three short marches from Sahranpoor. Between this and Delhi, lies Panniput, famous for the last action fought between the Moslems and Hindoos, in which the latter were completely defeated, and, in my opinion, much more so, as being the spot on which Nadir Shah encountered Mahomud, the reigning emperor of Hindostan, in 1738. The result is well known. If, in the promiscuous rapine of his enemy, the unfortunate monarch first experienced adversity, he was, at least, when encompassed by treachery, indebted to Nadir's generosity for life and empire.

I wandered over the plains which are said to have been the scene of such vicissitudes,

tudes. 'Similar to Cutterah, where a new town has rapidly risen, to embarrass the researches of the curious, but little remains to guide the footsteps of 'the inquisitive traveller. The scattered tumuli, and various ruins, attest the slaughter and devastation which have been made. But the pomp, splendour, and "all the circumstance of glorious war;"—the position of the contending armies, and the flight of Saadut Khan, the base Soubah of Oude, which determined the fortune of the day in the Persian's favour,—are to be feebly collected from the garrulity of a Hindoo Faquir, whose father, Gourie, was a spectator of the battle.

CHAP IV.

Great Fair at Hurdwar.—Rapacity of the Brahmins.—

A Missionary appears, and attempts Conversion.—

Remarks on Agriculture in general in Bengal.

On the 28th of March, 1814,* I left Sahranpoor, on a second visit to Hurdwar, desirous of being a spectator of one of the largest and most considerable fairs held in this quarter of the globe. We reached this celebrated place of resort on the thirty-first at daybreak†; and a few days presented a scene, novel and striking beyond description.

* My stay, altogether, at Sahranpoor, was little more than a year. I consider its climate, and the adjacent country, to be infinitely superior to that of any other part of Bengal.

† The general custom is to march at one, or two, in the morning, to avoid the intense heat of the sun, when above the horizon: of course, this early rising is only necessary in the hot season.

description. Sixty thousand people are supposed to have been collected at the fair. The spot on which it is held, not exceeding a mile in length, or a third of that in breadth, presented a medley of Persians, Tartars, Seiks, and natives from every part of India, Jats, Rohillas, Greekers, &c. of the reality of which, not a bare idea can be entertained by even the most lively imagination.

The astonishing variety of features, dresses, languages and customs ; the savage appearance of the Tartar, contrasted with the prepossessing countenance of the Seik ; the noble stature of the Persian, with the effeminate form of the Hindoo, presented, to the curious and discriminating, so many delicate shades, and such richness of colouring throughout, that, as a living picture of Asiatic men and manners, and as affording an inexhaustible fund of amusement and information—a
large

large fair at Hurdwar, may almost be considered unrivalled.

It is scarcely necessary to mention, that bathing was the grand attraction. Wretches loaded with enormities, and oppressed by the weight of their sins, bend annually their steps to this spot of unparalleled superstition and priestcraft. Here, lavishing on the Brahmins a portion of their wealth, they are absolved of their offences, and return to their several homes with consciences pure and unsullied as the stream in which they have immersed.

The Brahmins possessing among the Hindoos both the highest spiritual and temporal authority, fatten on the credulity of their worshippers. Religion, here, as in the darker ages of Europe, assumes a shape the curse and bane of the people. It paralyzes the energies, and corrupts the very vitals, of those whom it should support. Its ministers enjoy all the pleasures and

luxuries of this life ; and to the deluded wretch, who, with tears in his eyes, * offers the few pice, industriously acquired by the sweat of his brow, they point to the heavens, and in promising future happiness, fail not to menace everlasting punishment for the smallness of the offering.

The sum accumulated by the Brahmins at the fair of 1814 is said to have exceeded two lacs of rupees ;† for though it is pretended, that the demand on each Hindoo bathing is proportioned to his circumstances, one may readily suppose this appearance of justice is but little adhered to ; and indeed, from the great wretchedness which ever prevails after this fair, from which multitudes return half famished and literally naked, it is easy to perceive that
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* This is no fanciful picture wrought for the occasion. I have witnessed it repeatedly ;—as who, that has observed any thing in India, but has done the same ?

† £25,000.

the avarice of the priesthood is only surpassed by the atrocity of the means which they employ to gratify it.

During the greater part of this fair, which lasted nearly three weeks, an Anabaptist missionary (Mr. Chamberlain), in the service of her highness the Begum Sumroo, attended, and from a Hindostanee translation of the scriptures read daily a considerable portion. His knowledge of the language was as that of an accomplished native; his delivery impressive, and his whole manner partook much of mildness and benignity. In fine, he was such as all who undertake the arduous and painful duties of a missionary should be. No abuse, no language which could in any way injure the sacred service he was employed in, escaped his lips. Having finished his allotted portion, on every part of which he commented and explained, he recited a short prayer, and concluded the evening by

bestowing his blessing on all assembled. At first, as may be expected, his auditors were few : a pretty convincing proof, when sixty thousand people were collected, that it was not through mere curiosity they subsequently increased. For the first four or five days he was not surrounded by more than as many hundred Hindoos ; in ten days (for I regularly attended), his congregation had increased to as many thousands. From this time, until the conclusion of the fair, they varied ; but never, on a rude guess, I should fancy, fell below eight thousand. They sat around, and listened with an attention which would have reflected credit on a Christian audience. On the missionary's retiring, they every evening cheered him home with " May the Padre (or priest) live for ever ! "

Such was the reception of a missionary at Hurdwar, the Loretto of the Hindoos, at a time when five lacs of people were

were computed to have been assembled, and whither Brahmins from far and near had considered it their duty to repair. What was not the least singular, many of these Brahmins formed part of his congregation. They paid the greatest deference to all that fell from him, and when in doubt requested an explanation. Their attendance was regular, and many whose countenances were marked were ever the first in assembling. Thus, instead of exciting a tumult, as was at first apprehended, by attempting conversion at one of the chief sources of idolatry, Mr. Chamberlain, by his prudence and moderation, commanded attention; and I have little doubt, ere the conclusion of the fair, effected his purpose, by converting to Christianity men of some character and reputation.

Let it not, however, be inferred from this solitary instance (which, aiming at impartiality, I have considered my duty to

represent precisely as it occurred), that I assume the Hindoo conversion, generally speaking, to be easy or practicable. With them, appearance is every thing. Dazzling their senses is the surest and most effectual means to command their attention ; and, without it, all the merits and sufferings of our blessed Redeemer are vainly exhausted on those who have shut their ears. The truth is, the Protestant form of worship is little adapted to the narrow and contracted ideas of the Hindoo. The unadorned simplicity we so admire in it is the most powerful obstacle to his embracing it ; and it is for this very reason, that although the missionaries, sent annually from Europe, diligently labour in the vineyard, few converts, and even those of the lowest and most despicable caste, such as it would be a disgrace for any respectable Hindoo to associate with, are gained ; while the Roman Catholic church, with all the commanding
pomp

pomp and splendour of its ceremonies, its images, relics, &c. assimilating, in a great degree, to their own mode of worship, has been certainly more successful in calling these deluded children to its bosom. However, if much is to be accounted for on these grounds, still more is to be ascribed to the humble instruments employed in this great work—the conversion of sixty millions !

The generality of these men are sent out by the different missionary societies. They arrive in India on a scanty salary, barely sufficient to afford them the necessities of life. The Hindoo, who is taught from his infancy to esteem money the *summum bonum*, and poverty as the greatest curse ; whose mind is swayed solely by interest ; whose very demeanour accommodates itself to the standard of your possessions ; sees himself assailed by vagabonds uncountenanced by government, un-

associated with by any; poor, no equipage, no attendants. These men, with an utter contempt for the *suaviter in modo* towards idolators, abuse his faith, his priests; his priests, to whom sentiments little short of adoration are directed; exclaim against his idolatry, and threaten his whole generation, in case of non-repentance, with eternal misery.

Patient of suffering, the Hindoo hears all without indignation. He replies, that heaven is a palace of a thousand doors; that it best becomes each man to enter it according to his own persuasion; that he desires no one to become a proselyte to his errors (if errors they are), and is astonished that men should take the trouble to visit so remote a country, for the purpose of propagating doctrines which, though they would, probably, prove a source of blessings to their own caste, can never benefit his. Such is the answer of the idolator!

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On the 1st of June, 1814, I badé adieu to Sahranpoor, purposing to proceed through the Dooab to Calcutta, and from thence embark for England. I should thus be enabled to visit the cities of Delhi, Agra, and Lucknow ; three places most worthy of attention in India.

In the mean time, I shall take a rapid sketch of the system of agriculture pursued in this part of the world. Zemindars, or land-holders, with the Ryots, or tillers of the soil, may, in respect to numerical computation, the influence which the one party exercises over the other, and the state of villeinage in which the latter are retained, be deemed, at once, the most considerable, and the most firmly connected of bodies in India. It has long been debated, whether the zemindarree system, as established by the British government, has, in any way, proved beneficial to the Ryot; and whether, by the seeming liberality of its principles,
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he has been at all relieved from the grinding oppression under which he lay as subject to native power.

The liberality which ever characterizes the British government, is, I grant, invaluable, to those capable of appreciating it. It will compensate for the invasion of an empire under slaves and tyrants, for engrossing the revenues of that country, and for apportioning to ourselves the richest of its possessions. All this we readily allow the mildness of the British sway will amply remunerate : but it is not so with the Hindoo. Born in slavery, its fetters are congenial to his disposition ; and, provided you leave him undisturbed in them, he envies not all your boasted independence. Forbidden by the prejudices of his caste to rise superior to the situation in which his birth has placed him, he realizes the story of the ass in the fable, perfectly regardless of who governs, as conscious that under all he must suffer.

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To free such men and render them totally independent of their immediate lords, the Zemindars, would have been a harsh and cruel measure. Government, therefore, has wisely tempered British lenity with Asiatic power ; and, by this means, adapted its sway to the prejudices and pursuits of so considerable a class. If, as I have previously remarked, a lease now granted to the Zemindar for the term of seven years, secures to him the advantage of a fixed unvariable rent during the whole of that period, it by no means necessarily follows that the Ryot participates in this benefit. The former, who rents the lands from government, shares them out to this last on his own terms ; and, provided the rents are regularly forthcoming, it may be easily conjectured, little inquiry is made as to the mode in which they are collected. Thus, whatever may be urged, correctly speaking, the Ryot is as much subservient to native controul,

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as if the British government did not exist ; and the only question to be now considered is, whether the Zemindars are at present invested with equal powers of oppression, in the collection of their rents, as under the native governments.

The principle adopted by the British government, in the collection of its revenues, is, if any Zemindar fails in prompt payment, his land is immediately exposed to sale by public auction, and the Ryots are ejected to make room for more regular tenants. The mild, equable sway, so much insisted on, though certainly desirable, possesses few recommendations to the Hindoo ; who, if uninterrupted, would pursue his daily avocations—would, as usual, cultivate his field, though the very adjoining one was a scene of battle. We must not, therefore, allow ourselves to be deceived by expressions which have no meaning. Those prejudiced in favour of the system,
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are constantly dinning freedom and security in one's ears, without ever considering whether he who is born in slavery, cares either for one or the other.

Ploughing, in India, is almost ever performed by oxen,* Commonly two, but sometimes four of these animals, which are very small, are yoked together by a piece of wood passing above and below their necks. Between them is the hull, or plough, of a most simple construction, being nothing but one single piece of wood, with a high prong, in shape like an anchor, attached: the upper part, and which the Ryot retains in his hand, is of wood, as the other of iron turns up the soil. Both the plough and oxen may commonly be purchased for ten rupees, about £1. 15s. English money. In many parts of Bengal three crops a year are not unfrequent. Vegetation is surprizingly

* With some few exceptions in the upper provinces, where buffaloes are used.

prizingly rapid, and more particularly so in the season of the rains. Rice, the chief article of subsistence with the natives, thrives amazingly at this season, when the inundations of the Ganges covering whole plantations of it, they are seen in their boats gathering their harvests. After the manner of scripture, the unmuzzled ox treads out the grain : all threshing is performed by these animals, who, describing a small circle, yoked four or five together, go round and round until their labour is accomplished. The usual mode of preserving it, save in the lower parts of Bengal, where the humidity of the climate renders a house necessary, is under ground.

Wheat, barley, and a coarse kind of grain eaten by the poorer natives, is most common. No oats are cultivated, though I once saw a few growing wild near Hurdwar. Chunna, a kind of pea, is given to horses in India, and denominated gram.

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The sugar-cane is very general : extensive plantations of it are to be seen in all parts ; as likewise mustard, the oil of which is in much esteem by the natives. The harrow in use is merely a grooved beam, for which a couple of oxen are specially kept. It may not be amiss to remark, that the majority of Ryots are Hindoos, and that Mahometans in India rarely participate in husbandry.

CHAP. V.

Of Delhi.—Mr. Metcalfe, the Resident.—Objects beheld at a short Distance.—Ceremony of Introduction to the Great Mogul.—His general Character, Appearance, and Dependence.—His Revenues.—The many Persons confined in the Palace.—His Majesty's Harem, and those of the Princes.—Dewan Koss.—Royal Gardens.—Mosques and Baths.—Meeting the Emperor in the former.—His Suwarree, or Retinue.—Reflexions.

ON the 8th of June, 1814, I entered imperial Delhi; a city which, whether we consider its ancient power, riches and resources, or the many revolutions it has undergone, from the time of its founder* to the present day; whether we view it, in the reign of Humaioon, as the metro-
polis

* Delu, from whom it derives its name; he reigned seven hundred years before our era.

polis of an empire at the summit of its prosperity—in that of Shah Jehan, of its riches—or in that of his son Aurungzebe, of its military splendour, and trace its gradual decay, from the invasion of Nadir Shah,* the horrid massacres and barbarities he perpetrated, and the mines of wealth of which he pillaged it, we must own, without hesitation, that no city in the world, not even Rome herself, has experienced more vicissitudes, nor left so melancholy an example to posterity, of what may be expected from a feeble, corrupt, and treacherous government.

My letters to the Resident, Mr. Metcalfe, procured me every attention; and to his civilities I am indebted for being able to

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form

* I prefer the modern period, 1730, to that of Timor; who, although he sacked the city, can little be said to have caused its decay. For many years after, it flourished in all its pristine vigour as the capital of Hindostan.

form a much juster idea of the grandeur and magnificence which once characterized this far-famed city, than I otherwise could have done. I entered from the eastward, and previous to my arrival, enjoyed a noble prospect of the whole.*

It stands on the banks of the Jumna, a pretty and generally rapid, though not large river. The lofty walls of the imperial palace, which were formerly washed by it, and the gilded spires of the Jumma Musgid, are two of the most prominent objects as seen at a distance from Delhi. The former extend three miles in circumference, are built of a kind of red free-stone of a great thickness, and serve to convey some faint idea of those noble structures planned and executed

* The city, except on the side of the river, is surrounded by a strong wall. I crossed the Jumna, and on my approach, beheld the whole to advantage.

cuted by the descendants of the illustrious Timor.

The morning of the 12th was appointed by the Resident for my introduction to the Emperor and King. We accordingly left the Shahlimah * at about five in the morning, for the residency in town: Having here breakfasted and dressed, we proceeded in palanquins to the palace.

The Resident's *suwarree* was at once princely and elegant; a troop of irregular cavalry, and about one hundred silver sticks, bespoke, as we passed, the rank and titles of Mr. Metcalfe. I had scarcely passed the gates of the palace, ere it was intimated to me that etiquette did not allow of my proceeding farther in my palanquin, or of the attendance of a *chattah*, none but

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* The country seat of the Resident, about eight miles from Delhi. Here are the ruins of one of Shah Jehan's palaces.

the imperial umbrella being suffered to be elevated within a certain distance of the Dewan-Khoss. On this, we quitted our palanquins and walked to the Durbar. It was here that it became necessary to leave our shoes, and proceed barefoot into the presence of the Emperor. I was introduced with a low *salaam* ; presented in a handkerchief my *nuzr** of five gold mohurs, which was accepted ; and though neither honoured by a bow nor word from his Majesty, he intimated to the Nazir that, according to custom, I should be invested with a *colaut*, or honorary dress. On this, I was conducted out of the imperial presence, and being attired in a green tinselled dress of the coarsest cloth, and with a *sir-pash*

* The Eastern custom of never entering the presence of a superior without gifts, is of great antiquity : it is noticed by Elian, Hist. Var. II, chap. 31, 32.

*pash** around my head, the whole about the value of thirty rupees, I returned to make my second obeisance to his Majesty ; continued nearly a quarter of an hour longer, conversing with the Omrahs, and different natives of rank, with which the throne was surrounded, when the rising of the King was the signal of separation, and the Durbar broke up. His Majesty holds these levees daily, though Monday is the only day on which the Resident attends.

The reigning emperor is Acbar the Second,† who, though a kind husband and indulgent parent, is considered as a weak, vacillating monarch. He is a venerable looking man, of about sixty, and has a fine and strikingly expressive countenance.

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Possessing

* Or ornament for the head. At Delhi it is commonly formed of a string of cheap, gaudy stones.

† Descended, in the fourteenth degree, from Timor, by Miran Shah, his third son.

Possessing the mere semblance of royalty, without an atom of the substance, we behold the jurisdiction of the British government as absolute at Delhi, and even within the very walls of his Majesty's palace, as it is in Calcutta.

It is a curious fact that the monarch, at whose accession to the throne a deed of gift, is issued, making over to us the territory we have acquired, should be, at the very moment, a pensioner of the Company's, and receive from them an annual salary of twelve lacs of rupees (£136,000 sterling). Exclusive of this pension, the King possesses some extensive jaghires, in Mewat: so, what with the amount of these, and the presents he receives, his Majesty's revenue is generally estimated at £200,000 a year.

The King lives in little or no state, and, except on great occasions, such as the Buckree Eed, Mohurram, &c. when etiquette

quette obliges him to leave his palace, makes but a poor appearance. The fact is, the descendants of his ancestors, for all of whom he is compelled to provide, are so numerous, as to leave, when their several salaries are deducted, but a slender pittance for his own support. No less than nineteen thousand women, and seven hundred males,* descendants, either lineally or collaterally,

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of

* When it is recollected that from the days of Timor to the present hour, the harems of the Moguls have been habitually recruited with the fairest and most beautiful women of the East; when the various marriages and inter-marriages, contracted by the progeny of these concubines, from the closest relationship down to the remotest degrees of consanguinity, are considered—and still add to our calculation the children begotten in wedlock within the palace, commencing from the third son of Timor down to the present Emperor, embracing a period of no less than four hundred years—reckon up their several sons, and review the alliances contracted by them—our wonder will in a great degree cease; and the astonishing disproportion between the births and deaths of India may afford matter for interesting speculation.

of the blood royal, are immured within the walls of the palace: a number which appears incredible to those unacquainted with Asiatic manners and customs. The majority of these never have, and never will, behold the outside of the walls, but as a kind of state prisoners are rigidly secluded in the interior. No wonder the women should prefer death to such an existence; or that they should face it in its most horrid shapes to attain their liberty. Numbers throw themselves from the walls of the zenanas; but so strictly are all orders respecting them observed, that I fancy an escape was never heard of: indeed such a thing is tantamount to an impossibility, and it was but lately that a sipahee on duty was brought to a court-martial for merely enquiring of a young girl who fell at his feet from a great height, the reason of so extraordinary an act. The orders are so rigid respecting any one addressing the ladies

ladies of the harem, or even should they address you, against affording them any reply, that he narrowly escaped being cashiered for disobedience of orders.

His Majesty's harem consists of three hundred ladies ; and doubtless the most beautiful women of Cashmere and Circassia compose it. Say that ten of the chief princes can afford to retain as many, which it is very well known not more than half of that number can do, nevertheless, allowing they can, this will engage 3,000 ; with his Majesty's, 3,300 ; say 4,000 ; which is the very utmost that can be supposed to be engaged in the royal zenanas ; abstract this number from the 19,000, and there will remain 15,000 ; allow that half of these, and probably more than half, are old and infirm Salteens, or the concubines and descendants of former monarchs, nevertheless, there will still remain the amazing number of six or seven thousand females, many of them

them no doubt young and beautiful, confined in the palace, and denied all those solaces and endearments which alone can render life desirable.

The Dewan-Khoss, or room in which the Emperor holds his Durbar,* is considered by far the most beautiful of those permitted to be seen ; and indeed, save the harem, every part of the palace is accessible : I was greatly struck with it. It is built of white marble, and was richly inlaid throughout with gold and precious stones. Only the most inferior of the latter now remain, the Mahrattas having carried off all of value : but the marks showing where they have been, and how extracted, still exist.

From the Dewan-Khoss my Cicerone conducted me to the door of the harem, which is usually concealed by a curtain. On
this

* Court or levee.

this occasion it was complacently drawn aside ; but expecting a high treat, and devoured by curiosity, I alas ! was only gratified with the sight of a fine gilded door, having a grate in the middle, not very unlike those used in the convents at Madeira. Beyond lies the penetralia, sacred to every unhallowed eye of curiosity.

From hence I was led through the imperial gardens, and visited the mosques and baths ; they are likewise of marble, but have little deserving attention. In the former, I again had an opportunity of beholding his Majesty, who was taking the air in the carriage used by him at this season of the year : it is made of khuss,* beautifully gilt and varnished. He was accompanied by the chief Omrahs, or nobles of his court,

with

* Khuss is the root of a grass; and when formed either into carriages, or tatties, and wetted with water, it emits a fragrant smell; and the hot winds passing between it, become cool and agreeable.

with many attendants besprinkling the carriage with rose-water. His *suwarrie* however, on the whole, was by no means princely, but betrayed evident signs of poverty and depression. And is this, said I to myself as he passed, the present representative of the illustrious house of Timor, that race which astonished the world by the deeds of its founder, and whose successors, for a series of years, sat, with such unexampled splendour and dignity, on the throne of Hindostan? Great as are the vicissitudes of life, I own I was much affected on contemplating this pageant of ideal power; though, when I called to mind the fate of his father,* blind, and a prisoner in the hands of his enemies, I could not but consider his successors as in some degree fortunate.

To a petty and contracted mind, which
views all whose birth has placed them in
situations

* Shah-Allum, the late king. Golaum Caudor, an adopted son, put out his eyes with the point of his dagger.

situations superior to its own with an eye of jealousy and envy, the court of the Great Mogul will afford infinite gratification. Here may be seen hundreds of the blood royal, connected by every gradation of kindred to the illustrious founder of their race, existing on the paltry stipend of fifty rupees a month, and begging from each passing stranger the alms of generosity. I fancy I hear it asked, can such things be? —That a Belisarius* should be so reduced, was once thought strange; but habit, which renders most things indifferent, has brought us to bestow as little thought as compassion on the miserable fate of the house of Timor. Now

“ *Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,*

“ *Fallen, from its high estate !”*

DRYDEN.

* The *date obolum Belisario* has, however, found a powerful antagonist in the liberal scepticism of Gibbon; and yet, for the sake of Marmontel's elegant and pathetic tale, I could almost wish the fiction had been at least historically true.

Whilst I was at Delhi, the Emperor was deprived of the last remains of independence, in the keys of his own palace gates. In mentioning the circumstance I blush to assign its reasons. The Emperor's third son, Mizra Baba, had a daughter born to him by one of the slaves. Well aware of the morality of the palace, and that nothing could secure her from prostitution, he, three days after its birth, deliberately cut the child's throat with his own hands. The body was conveyed at night beyond the walls and interred. The old King, attached to his son, seemed so little inclined to investigate the affair, that the Resident's interference was indispensable. The Nazir, who had concealed the circumstance, was deprived of his keys and office, which, for the future, were to be vested in some confidant of the Resident; and it was rumoured that Mirza himself would not escape with impunity.

The

The secret memoirs of the court of Delhi would unfold scenes of depravity unequalled perhaps at Rome, in the worst days of her worst emperors. No one, who has not visited this fallen and vicious capital of the East, can possibly conceive the ardour with which every species of profligacy is encouraged; nor the many shapes it Proteus-like assumes, to accommodate itself to the various wishes and tempers of individuals. It would seem that, in such pursuits, the Delhians sought only to forget their pristine state.

Subject to the orders of the Resident, a captain of native infantry commands in the palace, to whom no circumstance, however trifling, occurs, even in the seraglios, but is daily reported. A more extraordinary system of espionage, I suppose, does not exist. I have frequently listened to the recitals of these people, who are of course well paid, in silent astonishment. Indeed,
some

some of their bulletins of the ladies in the harems were so little consistent either with delicacy or probability, that I greatly questioned their veracity, but was assured they were possessed of the most undoubted means of information, and that by far the majority of those attending on the respective seraglios were in their employ.

CHAP. VI.

Description of the Jumma-Musgid.—Appearance of the City, as seen from its Minarets.—Its ancient and present Extent.—Its former and present Population.—The Musgid of Roshun-ul-Dowlah.—Dowe's translation of Ferishta quoted as a Sketch of Nadir-Shah's Barbarity.—The Tombs of Humaioon, Nizam-ud-Deen and Sufter-Jung.—The Cutub-Minar.—Leave Delhi.*

THE Jumma-Musgid is a noble mosque, erected by the Emperor Shah Jehan at an immense expense. You ascend to it by a grand flight of stone steps, which leads through a handsome gateway into a spacious court with a marble reservoir* in the middle. From hence the three domes of white marble, with gilded spires, which rise
I close

* These reservoirs are common near all mosques, and are intended for the followers of Mahommud to perform their ablutions in, previous to prayer.

close to each other and form the body of the building, flanked on each side by lofty minarets, have a superb appearance. The interior of the mosque is small, and generally filled by Sueyuds, or other near descendants of the Prophet. The more ignoble followers of Islamism are content to prostrate themselves in front of the building, and eight or ten rows of them may often be seen thus employed.

I ascended one of the minars, and to form a correct idea of what Delhi has been, and to what a distance the ruins extend, this, though a great labour, should be complied with. The city, though now embracing a circumference of only six miles, and containing a population of but four hundred thousand, was formerly eleven miles round, and its inhabitants computed to exceed a million.

— It now indeed presents a melancholy picture of fallen greatness. So many miles covered

covered with ruins, beautiful even in decay, cannot but cast a gloom over the mind of every visitor not wholly devoid of taste or sensibility, in whatever spirits he may repair to them. The spark of enthusiasm soon kindles of itself; and in gazing on the tottering ruins of Delhi, who but will pause and ponder on her ancient majesty!

Near the Musgid of Roshun-ul-Dowlah, in which Nadir Shah, during the massacre of the unhappy Delbians, sat, I have often mused, and endeavoured to trace in my mind every circumstance connected with the fate of the city, and the instrument of its wretchedness. The mosque is situate in the finest street of Delhi (the Chandnee-Choke) through which runs an aqueduct, where formerly flowed the celebrated waters of Cousser;* at the bottom of it stands the

1 2

imperial

* See Sir W. Jones's Works, 4to. edit. *Histoire de Nadir Shah*, vol. 5th, p. 304. Mr. Metcalfe has restored the ancient, though now useless aqueduct, and greatly improved the appearance of the street by a row of trees.

imperial palace, and near its top is the Shah-Gunge, in which the tumult arose that subsequently ended in the massacre of the citizens. But Dowe's translation is at once so elegant, and by what I could learn so correct an account of these transactions, that well assured am I of pardon in extracting it. After describing Nadir-Shah's entrance into Delhi, it thus proceeds :
“ The Persian, in the mean time, placed
“ guards upon the gates of the city, with
“ orders to permit no person whatever to
“ pass in or out without his special licence.
“ These strict injunctions were given, to
“ prevent the inhabitants from evacuating
“ the place, and from carrying away their
“ wealth. He at the same time issued his
“ commands that no person whatsoever
“ should be molested ; but he demanded
“ twenty-five crores, about thirty millions
—“ of our money, as a contribution for sparing the city. Whilst the magistrates
“ were

“ were contriving ways and means to raise
 “ this enormous sum, by laying a tax in
 “ proportion to their wealth on individuals,
 “ a famine began to rage in the city, as all
 “ communication with the country was
 “ cut off.

“ Upon the 10th, Nadir Shah ordered
 “ the granaries to be opened, and sold rice
 “ at a certain price: this occasioned a
 “ prodigious mob in all the public bazars,
 “ particularly in the Shah-Gunge, or royal
 “ market. A Persian soldier in this mar-
 “ ket, seeing a man selling pigeons, seized
 “ by force upon his basket. The fellow to
 “ whom the basket belonged made a hide-
 “ ous outcry, and proclaimed aloud that
 “ Nadir Shah had ordered a general pil-
 “ lage. The mob immediately fell on the
 “ Persian, who was protected by some of
 “ his countrymen; a great tumult arose,
 “ and some persons, bent on mischief,
 “ cried aloud that Nadir Shah was dead,

“ and that now was the time to drive the
“ Persians out of the city. The citizens,
“ who in general carried arms, drew their
“ swords, and began to cut to pieces the
“ Persians, wherever they could be found.
“ The report of the death of Nadir Shah
“ flew, like lightning, through every street
“ in Delhi, and all places were filled with
“ tumult, confusion, and death.

“ It was now dark, and the Persians, who
“ had been straggling through the city, re-
“ turned to the citadel, except two thou-
“ sand, who were killed by the mob.
“ About twelve o’clock at night, the King of
“ Persia was informed of this transaction ;
“ he immediately ordered what men he
“ had with him under arms, and putting
“ himself at their head, marched out as far
“ as the Musgid of Roshun-ul-Dowlah.
“ He thought it prudent to halt there till
“ day-light should appear : he in the mean
“ time sent for the Nizam Sirbillund, and
“ Himmur

“ Himmur the Mogul Vizer, and threat-
 “ ened to put them to instant death,
 “ charging them with fomenting these
 “ tumults; they swore upon the Koran
 “ that they were innocent, and he par-
 “ doned them.

“ When day-light began to appear, a
 “ person from a neighbouring terrace
 “ fired upon Nadir Shah, and killed an
 “ officer by his side. The King was so
 “ enraged, that though by this time the
 “ tumult had totally subsided, he ordered
 “ the officers of the cavalry to lead their
 “ squadrons through the street, and some
 “ musqueteers to scour the terraces, and
 “ commence a general massacre among the
 “ unfortunate inhabitants. This order was
 “ executed with so much rigour, that before
 “ two o’clock in the afternoon, above
 “ 100,000, without distinction of age, sex,
 “ and condition, lay dead in their blood:
 “ though not above one-third part of the

“ city was visited by the sword. Such was
“ the panic, terror, and confusion of
“ these poor wretches, that instead of
“ bravely opposing death, the men threw
“ down their arms, and with their wives
“ and children, submitted themselves, like
“ sheep, to the slaughter. One Persian
“ soldier often butchered a whole family,
“ without meeting with any resistance.

“ The Hindoos, according to their barbarous custom, shut up their wives and
“ daughters, and set fire to their apartments, and then threw themselves into
“ the flames. Thousands plunged headlong into wells, and were drowned.
“ Death was seen in every horrid shape,
“ and at last seemed rather to be sought
“ after than avoided.

“ The King of Persia sat, during this
“ dreadful scene, in the Musgid of Roshunul-Dowlah ; none but the slaves durst
“ come near him, for his countenance was
“ dark

“ dark and terrible. At length the unfortunate Emperor, attended by a number of his chief Omrahs, ventured to approach him, with downcast eyes. The Omrahs, who preceded Mahommud, bowed down their foreheads to the ground; Nadir Shah sternly asked them, what they wanted? they cried out, with one voice “ ‘ Spare the city!’ Mahommud said not a word, but the tears flowed fast from his eyes. The tyrant, for once moved with pity, sheathed his sword, and said, “ ‘ For the sake of the Prince Mahommud, I forgive.’ ”—See *Dowe's Hindoostan*, 8vo. edit. vol. iii.

The ruins most worthy of note, and indeed the only ones frequented, are the ancient fort of Delhi, the tombs of Humaioon, Suftur Jung, and Nizam-ud-Deen, together with the Cutub Minar, about ten miles from the city. The fort is fast mouldering away, and I predict that, ere many years

years have elapsed its great extent and heavy masonry will be distinguished only by its huge and scattered fragments.

The tombs, however, are in a high state of preservation; and that of Humaioon, erected as the name denotes to the memory of that emperor, is more particularly deserving of notice. It is a fine lofty building, profusely decorated internally and externally with black and white marble. The stone fretwork of the interior is fine, and well contrasted with the simple slab which points out the grave of the king. This is encircled by minor ones, of the race of Timor, the tomb of Humaioon having become the place of interment for all the royal blood. It is surrounded by an extensive wall; and although little or nothing is expended to keep it in repair, it may still subsist for many years an ornament amidst a heap of ruins.

From

From Humaioon's to Nizam-ud-Deen's is but a short distance : it is a small but splendid tomb. The entrance is by a tolerably extensive court of white marble. An ascent of three steps conducts to the hall in which the Nizam's body is deposited. A marble monument is erected over the grave, extending above which is a raised canopy of damask silk : the tomb is well endowed, and much care and neatness are discernible throughout.

Sufter Jung, nephew to Saadut Khan, the founder of the present race of the Nuwuabs of Oude, is the same whom Dowe stigmatizes as " the infamous son of a " more infamous Persian pedlar." His tomb resembles Humaioon's, though considerably less adorned. And now I come to one of the greatest curiosities around Delhi, I mean the Cutub-Minar, so called from the Emperor by whom it was erected. It is a remarkable pillar, built of brick, and

cased with stone, two hundred and thirty-eight feet in perpendicular height, by twelve feet in diameter. The whole of its exterior is finely ornamented with various extracts from the Koran inimitably carved in the Persian characters. The letters, long as they have remained, are not in the least defaced; and indeed the whole pillar, though so many years old, appears as fresh as any modern building. A spiral staircase, in the inside, leads to its summit. Though at present reckoned dangerous, from several stones at the top having become loose, I ascended it; but the country around Delhi is so bleak and dreary, scarcely a tree to be seen, and the soil entirely sand, that I cannot say I was at all recompensed for the trouble and fatigue I underwent.

The King is very partial to this spot: I fancy more so from his father, the late Shah Allum, having been buried here, than on any other account. His Majesty and a
few

few of the chief princes have country seats and spend here much of their time.*

On the 15th of June I left Delhi, and proceeded towards Agra.

* I consider the village of Cutub, now almost a pile of ruins, as the boundary pillar of ancient Delhi. Nor do I think this can well be disputed if the several remains of mosques and pagodas are attentively surveyed. Ruins, although abundant on every side of Delhi, are more remarkably so to the westward; where they are not promiscuously scattered, as would, most probably, be the houses of rich individuals, situate a few miles from an immense metropolis, but have been evidently erected with a due attention to regularity. Some traces of gardens are even now to be observed; and though I learnt from the Resident, that the present accounts by no means gave the city, at any time, such an extent, it is nevertheless, in my opinion, very doubtful whether these testimonies should have much weight, when contrasted with the almost convincing proofs which exist to the contrary. Mayhap a kind of suburb extended for some miles beyond the walls, as is now the case in many large cities in India; but, were this the case, the suburbs of Delhi must have been equal to a very considerable town.

CHAP. VII.

Of Bindrabund.—Its Sanctity.—Sketch of the Indian Faquirs.—Folly of the Supposition that they have free Access to the Wives and Harems of the Hindoos.—Depavity of the Faquirs. Their Body seemingly more feared than despised by our Government.—An Instance in point.

ON the 21st, reached Bindrabund, a place celebrated through India for pretended sanctity, and the residence and resort of innumerable Faquirs. The Indian Faquirs, or Faqueers, are a set of mendicants, to which superstition in the first instance attached, and ignorance with credulity has confirmed, an idea of holiness. But as very erroneous ideas are generally entertained of these people, it will not be amiss to give a slight sketch of their occupations, mode of living, and characteristics.

It

It is not to be supposed, because the Faquir is, as the word imports, a beggar, that he is employed solely in providing for the day which is passing over his head, as is the custom of these kind of people in Europe—far otherwise; the Faquirs of India possess immense authority and power; are rich in villages, lands, and money; and it is by no means an uncommon thing to learn that the edifices and gardens you have most admired in various parts of the country, are the property of these extraordinary beggars. It is true that, with all this influence, they preserve an appearance wretched in the extreme; that they wander from city to city, many in a state of perfect nudity, and all of them more or less so;* their matted locks covering their faces,

* Their common and only garment, if such it may be called, is a small piece of linen passing between the legs, and secured behind by a string or ribbon. The ancient Gymnosophists, or those who go stark naked, are however everywhere to be found.

faces, and their painted bodies begrimed with filth, without a single halfpenny in their possession, and often performing penances shocking even to contemplate.

But here again their policy is as refined as it is infinitely superior to the comprehension of their credulous admirers. Such a conduct exalts them in the estimation of the bigotted Hindoos; and a follower of Brimha would as soon think of disowning the Ganges or Jumna, as turn from his door the Faquir who requested, nay even demanded, food for subsistence. They, in consequence, literally speaking, “take no
“thought of the morrow, as well knowing
“what the day will bring forth.” Secure of a livelihood, in whatever part of the country they may repair to, money would be to them but an incumbrance. It could only serve to whet the inclinations of the ill-disposed, who (resting as these Faquirs do in the most exposed situations) would
have

have little difficulty, and probably much less ceremony, in despoiling them of whatever treasure they possessed.

Harbouring however, as is the case with the Hindoos, an extraordinary opinion of their virtue, it is by no means true, as is absurdly supposed, that these Faquirs have free access to their wives and harems: a preposterous notion, which, to any one in the least acquainted with India, carries contradiction on its face.

I have often read, and still oftener heard asserted, that a Faquir has only to leave his slippers at the door of a house, to seclude even the husband, though his wife may be in the interior, from admittance. To show the falsehood of such an assertion, it would be enough to urge that Faquirs rarely wear slippers;* slippers, or indeed

K

any

* Some few of the Musselman Faquirs wear them, but the parsimony of a Hindoo is a powerful obstacle to his adopting the custom. I do not recollect, out of the multitude

any thing worn as a defence to the feet, would but ill accord with the disgusting nudity of their bodies. But every one who has been a day resident in the East, must be well aware that those who can afford to retain many women, allow not even a brother admittance to their harems ; and rather than sanction the intrusion of a stranger, would prefer firing their houses, and perishing with their women in the flames, as was repeatedly evinced at Delhi, and other places, on the invasions of Timor and Nadir Shah. Only the most inferior ranks of all, such as Ryots, or tillers of the soil, Buneas, or sellers of grain, &c. permit their wives to be publicly seen ; and even these are tenacious of their virtue to an excess. Moreover, a slur cast on the chastity of a Hindoo woman is fatal to her :
the

tude I have met with, ever having seen one of them with slippers ; and it is obvious that a Musselman would not be the father-confessor of a Hindoo woman.

the husband instantly returns her to her friends, who disdain the slightest communication, and she is, without delay, ejected from the caste of which she is a member.

The stoutest and most compact made men I have seen in Bengal, Raj-poots* not excepted, have been Faquirs;† and nothing can more strongly evince the weight with which their body preponderates in the scale of government, than a circumstance which occurred at this very place, Bindrabund, a few years since. Two fine young men, officers of the Bengal army, having occasion to stop, amused themselves by pelting some of the monkeys which so abound here. In an instant the blood-thirsty Faquirs rose, to the amount of several thousand, and chased them with

K 2

every

* These are the descendants of the ancient Rajahs, and compose the bulk of our Sipahce corps.

† The Faquirs of India are the “gens æterna in qua nemo nascitur” of Pliny; they however derive a plentiful supply from the vices and profligacy of their countrymen.

every kind of missile weapon they could lay hold of, to the banks of the Jumna.* It being the season of the rains, and the river much swollen, all the endeavours of their elephant could not surmount the rapidity of its current, and they were both unfortunately drowned.

It was natural to expect, that on a representation of the circumstance, decisive measures, worthy of a great and enlightened government, would have been adopted ; that on a requisition for the ringleaders to be delivered up not being complied with, the place would have been razed, and this horde of villany dispersed.

Such measures would have been applauded, as well becoming a government that boasts of never countenancing oppression ; and productive of no little good in dismembering so dangerous a society. But alas ! these notions of independence were little as-
sorted

* Bindrabund is situated on the banks of this river.

sorted either to the genius or pusillanimity of the Noble Lord at that time governor general.* In his eyes, the pecuniary compensation was the summum bonum; and by depriving them of lands to the annual value of a few thousand rupees, instead of taking signal vengeance on the murderers, I may confidently remark, that he disappointed the expectations, and lowered the Indian government in the esteem of every one.

The characteristics of the Faquir are a seeming independence of mind, which vanishes on being put to the test; invincible obstinacy in enduring pain; and undaunted resolution in the performance of any penance however severe, by which his credit is raised, or self-love flattered. As a member of the community at large he is a drone, who,

K 3 without

* I despise the old saying of "de mortuis nil nisi bonum," and will always substitute "verum." Did we attend to the former, Nero and Caligula may be idolized as saints.

without discharging the least service whatever, preys on the labours of the hive. His indolence yields only to his depravity, which last, it is generally allowed, no powers of language can adequately depict. He is insolent, assuming, crafty, and deceitful. A wretch disgusting in appearance, and who, one ought to suppose, not even the idolatrous Hindoos could, for a moment, associate with the idea of religion: but such is superstition, and so binding are the trammels of prejudice!

CHAP. VIII.

Arrival at Agra.—Built by the Emperor Acbar, and formerly the Seat of Government.—The Prison of Shah Jehan.—Singular Coincidence in his own and Father's Fate.—The Tauge Mahal.—Liberality of the Government in repairing it.—Tomb of the Emperor Acbar at Secundra.—Ruinous State of the Generality of Ancient Buildings in India.—Leave Agra.

ON the morning of the 23d of June, I arrived at Agra, a city situate on the Jumna, once the rival of the far-famed Delhi, and like her now almost fallen into obscurity.

This city, built by the Emperor Acbar,* was ever from his reign, unto the loss of all power by his successors, considered as of great importance. It was formerly the

K 4

seat

* Strictly speaking, Acbar did not build the city; for as a miserable, though extensive town, it existed long before: but as he alone gave it its present appearance, I have deemed it unnecessary to advert to its former state.

seat of government, and is interesting as having been the prison of Shah Jehan. Confined by his son Aurungzebe in the city he adorned and beautified, this emperor of the world* experienced the keenest pangs of retributive justice; divested of even the exterior appendages of sovereignty, he felt all the sufferings he had heaped on Jehangire, and bewailed in touching language those very afflictions and mortifications in his own person, to which he had subjected his own father.

The fort, in which the palace now appropriated as quarters to the commanding officer stands, is very extensive; but, from the height of the walls, which may so easily be brought to the ground and serve to fill up the ditch, I should fancy it could not be capable of much defence against a regular siege. The palace still bears many remains
of

* "King of the world," the literal translation of the two Persian words Shah Jehan.

of its former magnificence. I was during my stay residing in it, and derived no little amusement in wandering through the suite of marble chambers, gorgeously decorated with gold * and silver, viewing the baths, and endeavouring to trace in this decay of greatness the genius which dictated the "Aycen Acbaree."†

But what has chiefly contributed to rescue Agra from decay, to render it the most frequented of cities in India, and has immortalized the name of Shah Jehan, is that noble structure, the Tauge-Mahal, or as its application may justly characterize it, the Wonder of the World. It really is not in the power of language to do adequate justice to this universally admired tomb.

Situate

* A short time previous to my arrival, three thousand rupees had been offered by an eminent shroff of the city, for permission to *scrape* two of the gilded domes of the palace.

† See "The Institutes of Acbar," by his wise minister Abul-Fazl.

Situate on the banks of the Jumna, which sweeps beautifully beneath it, the Tauge, erected entirely of white marble, rises with an air of unparalleled grandeur, and elevates the mind to a transcendent pitch of admiration and delight.

Never shall I again know the sensations I experienced on first beholding it. Worthy of Shah Jehan, that illustrious patron of the arts—that sun, whose rays pierced with unusual brilliancy to either extremity of his empire; and who planned and executed so many noble monuments of genius and taste.

The Tauge Mahal, erected by this Emperor to the memory of his beautiful and adored wife Noor Jehan, or in English, “the light of the world,” daughter of his prime minister Asiph Jah, is said to have cost in English money eight hundred thousand pounds sterling; an amazing sum, if we consider the value of money in the
reign

reign of James I, with whom he was contemporary. It lies three coss to the westward of Agra, and is approached by a plain stone gateway, which, as if to render this contrast more surprising, conducts to a most magnificent one of black and white marble; this is covered with innumerable domes, and supplied with a massy pair of brazen gates,

“ Which, opening, grate harsh thunder.”

Through these you pass to the Tauge gardens; and it is from hence, while standing on the marble slabs which descend to them, that the coup-d’œil is in my opinion unrivalled.

The tomb, rising from the middle of the gardens, which are ornamented with marble fountains and laid out in extensive graperies and plantations of peach-trees, presents, with its front wholly adorned with various extracts from the Koran, inlaid in black marble, a superb appearance. Its principal

principal dome, on the top of which rests a gilded* spire and crescent, twenty feet high, is a noble object; and whilst viewing the lesser ones by which it is surrounded, you are unconsciously attracted towards the four elegant minarets, one of which adorns each corner of this splendid pile. These are peculiarly happy in the grace with which they are constructed. Their altitude is about one hundred feet; but, save the moving picture which is constantly presented on the Jumna, and which can as readily be obtained below, their summits are wholly devoid of prospect, the country, similar to that around Delhi, being nought but a sandy plain, unvaried either by trees or cultivation.

The ascent from the gardens to the Tauge is by a flight of steps, solid masses of marble, than which no other material is to be seen. By these you are led to an extensive

* Formerly of solid gold, but pillaged by the Mahrattas.

tensive terrace, considerably exceeding the length of the building and affording a delightful promenade. This conducts you to the door of the tomb, which, I am sorry to say, by no means corresponds with the rest, being mean and secured by a Hindostanee padlock. But, however, all cannot be the best; and where so much is excellent, to criticise seems invidious.

The interior is strikingly grand and impressive. In the centre stand the tombs, inclosed by an elegant skreen of marble* fretwork, eight feet high by forty in circumference. On the right rests the adored object to whose memory the Tauge is consecrated; on the left, and somewhat more elevated, is the tomb of her admirer. They are both unique in their appearance, which is prodigiously rich and beautiful, being covered with imitations of roses and other
flowers,

* Formerly of jasper, but likewise carried off by the Mahrattas.

flowers, the several colours and shades of which are represented by all kinds of precious stones inlaid with exquisite judgment and delicacy. Here too, as on the front of the building, extracts from the Koran are conspicuous, in black marble.

The Tauge comprises many small apartments, but none of them deserve particular notice. The principal one, in which the tombs are, is distinguished by a fine echo, adding greatly to its solemnity. About seven years since, an earthquake considerably injured these fine tombs, by cracking them in three or four places. The misfortune has been attempted to be remedied, by supplying melted silver, but the cracks are still discernible. No less than one lac of rupees has been expended by government in repairing and beautifying the Tauge within these last four years; for, like all other celebrated buildings in this country, time had been silently allowed to commit

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on it terrible depredations: the marble had become entirely black, its interior defaced by worse than Goths or Vandals; and, in fine, the whole was fast verging towards a beautiful ruin. This certainly reflects credit; but alas! I was given to understand, that it is now in contemplation to exhibit this magnificent fabric for money, and to deny admittance to all unfurnished with that great commanding key.

The tomb of the Emperor Acbar at Secundra, a trifling distance from Agra, has been a fine building, but is now in ruins. It was erected chiefly of marble, and even at present some parts wear a handsome appearance. What a pity it is, that through a sordid, unworthy spirit of economy, all those buildings most famous throughout the country for genius in the plan, or taste in execution, should be suffered to dwindle into decay! In viewing the monuments of art and curiosity, marked by various degrees of ruin,
which

which are scattered profusely through the Dooab, I knew not which to admire most, the amazing labour which is everywhere stamp'd on them, the many beauties of Indian architecture, or that philosophic indifference which can tamely look on and allow, what characterises the country's superiority, all its famous tombs, minarets, mosques and pagodas, to be ingulfed in one general undistinguished ruin.

From Agra I proceeded to Lucknow, the capital of Oude.

CHAP. IX.

Reach Lucknow.—Introduction to the Resident.—The Nuwauab Saadut-Ali-Khan.—The Imambarrah, erected by Asoph-ud-Doulah.—Saadut-Ali indifferent concerning it.—Prejudices of the Mahometans.—Splendour of the Court of Lucknow.—Constantin.—Sketch of the Character of General Martine.—The Nuwauab's Death, Character, and Administration.—Singular Sheep-eater of Lucknow.—Disposition of the People.

JULY the 8th 1814. My arrival this day at Lucknow, the seat of his excellency the Nuwauab-Vizier's government, was unmarked by any circumstance of peculiarity or interest. I was introduced to the Resident, Major Baillie, with whose attentions during my stay I could not but be highly gratified.

Lucknow certainly bears the palm of neatness and elegance of building from most of the cities of India. It has been greatly

improved

improved by his excellency the present Nuwuab, Saadut-Ali-Khan, whose government, in many other respects characterized by tyranny and avarice, has, in the embellishing of his capital, formed a contrast with that of his predecessors, as honourable as unexpected. His motives are of little consequence : beneficial acts, however, arising from ostentation, merit applause ; their result is felt, while the reasons that prompted them are forgotten.

The Imambarrah, or place of royal burial, is greatly esteemed : it is an extensive though heavy building. On the span of one arch is comprized its principal chamber, sixty feet long by twenty feet broad, and which for singularity is deservedly admired. The interior, however, does not agree with its external appearance, which is certainly grand and imposing. It is dirty in the extreme ; and the centre, in which the remains of Asoph-ud-Dowlah, the preceding Nuwuab,

Nuwuab, lie interred, is distinguished only by a silken canopy, as filthy as mean.

In the reign of this prince, the Imambarah, I was told, presented frequently a beautiful spectacle, being illuminated with a profusion of wax lights in elegant chandeliers ; but more especially at the festival of the Mohurrum, when the expenses of this place of worship were estimated at a lac of rupees.

Saadut Ali, the present Nuwuab, is even more than indifferent concerning its fate ; indeed it is reported, with what truth I know not, that he most sincerely wishes its decay. Musselmén are rarely found either to repair or beautify any building commenced by their predecessors : they possess a strange idea, that nought but calamity can attend on him who violates, in any way, the posture of circumstances acquired to him by the hand of death, and little care they that the alteration is for the better ; they con-

sider this as a fundamental article, and the effects of so lamentable a prejudice are visible throughout Bengal, in half-finished palaces, fine houses and extensive gardens.

In India, where the powers of destroying are ever more active than those of improvement, this is peculiarly distressing; it is for this reason that the Mahometan youth are ever found more desirous of adding to their own eclat, than of supporting that of their parents. The father commences, but should he die ere the conclusion, nothing is further from the son's mind than completing the work; no, he designs some other benefit by which his own name may be transmitted to posterity, and coolly allows his sire's intentions to be substituted for his deeds.

The Imambarrah was built by Asophud-Doulah, at the expense of one million sterling; less would have sufficed for his brother, Saadut-Ali, to have disliked it. He
has,

has, however, far surpassed his predecessor in works of utility; and will, on this account, leave a name, if not so splendid, at least more honourable, behind him.

Lucknow is the only court in India, the Nizam's excepted, in which any degree of magnificence now prevails; or, in whose state and grandeur oriental descriptions are realized. In the preceding pages I have spoken of Delhi—of Agra; as courts—sa metropolises, they exist no longer. The days of Timor, Shah Jehan and Acbar, are fled; and we now behold the descendants* of their Viziers, or prime ministers, the first and greatest of all the Indian powers.

His excellency the present Nuwab supports distinguished state, has upwards of a thousand elephants, many thousand horses,

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and

* Both the founders of the dynasties of Oude and the Deccan (the Nizam) were ministers of the court of Delhi; their independence arose from the extensive power and authority with which they were invested by their sovereign!

and innumerable fine and beautifully situated palaces; in fine, to say all in a word, he lives as an eastern prince. He is an elderly man of about sixty-four, and on my arrival was so unwell as not to admit of the introduction of strangers; I was consequently deprived of the pleasure I had expected in seeing him.

Lucknow is situated on the river Goomty, which, though not comparable to the Ganges or Jumna, as to size or rapidity, probably surpasses both in the purity of its waters, and the scenery of its banks. An air of comfort pervades the greater part of the city, and I remarked, with considerable satisfaction, that the loathsome and disgusting scenes of misery and poverty, so conspicuous in every other large city I had visited in India, were here either wholly unknown, or studiously concealed.

The poorer class of natives seemingly enjoy in Lucknow a degree of liberty fully
suitable

suitable to their condition; and if, in the exercise of it, they at times overstep the bounds of prudence and discretion, their licentiousness is quickly repressed by the just and dreaded power of every superior. In other respects, this city will bring forcibly to the recollection of an Englishman those of his native land; the same streets, fine houses, and meadows fertilized by the Goomty, form the interior and suburb of Lucknow, while the multitude of mosques, with their gilt spires and towering minars, give it an air of splendour to be only increased by a mid-day sun, reflecting them as masses of living gold.

Constantia, a villa built by the late General Martine at a short distance from Lucknow, is a striking monument of folly. To attempt its description would be vain: it is literally indescribable. The zoology of every clime appears to have been ransacked to adorn it, and carvings in stone, of un-

heard-of' birds, beasts, and fishes, the heterogeneous fancies of a diseased brain, with which the exterior of the building is entirely covered, have a strange and uncouth appearance. Descending a flight of steps, underneath all this waste of brick and mortar, is shown, in a small vault, the monument of this eccentric man. He preserved that uniformity of character, for which he was ever so remarkable, to the last; and, agreeable to his last request, surrounding his tomb are the figures of four grenadiers, mourning departed worth.

The vault, when visited, is illuminated by a handsome cut glass chandelier, and an inscription on a marble slab requests your prayers for his soul.

The character of General Martine* has been so ably traced by various pens, that I shall only

* See a well-written memoir of this officer in the Asiatic Journal, vol. ii. for 1816.

only here sketch his predominant characteristics. A soldier of fortune, General Martine had never experienced the advantages of education : he was ignorant of a valuable and specious knowledge, that of the world ; his mind was encrusted with prejudices, and those too of the most unfortunate tendency ; his sole aim was riches, and to acquire them, he little cared though the ties of friendship were violated, or those of delicacy infringed. Ever active in their pursuit, he at last succeeded in realizing a sum more enormous than his dreams of avarice had ever aspired to. Did it make him happy ? Far otherwise ! His liberality now became profusion ; his building, madness ; his rusticity, insulting ; his vulgarity, conspicuous ; and thus, those specks, which, but for his own inordinate desires, had lain dormant and been unnoticed, were, by his accumulation of wealth, considerably enlarged, and displayed
to

to the world in all their native deformity. The bulk of his fortune was, I understood, bequeathed to his relations in France, and large sums to charitable institutions.

It was about ten o'clock, on the night of the 11th July, when as I was stepping into my palanquin, to proceed from Lucknow to Jionpoor, that an express reached the Residency, requiring Major Baillie's immediate attendance at court, the Nuwuab being seriously indisposed. Though as little delay as possible occurred after the delivery of the message, neither the Resident nor any of the medical gentlemen were in time to see his highness expire; he was already dead when they arrived. The bursting a blood-vessel was the immediate cause of his death; though he was an old man, and had been long in a declining state. I was lucky in proceeding on my journey without waiting to hear the result, as the gates of the city were immediately closed, and neither ingress

gress nor egress permitted for the space of two days. His eldest son, Ghazee-ud-Deen-Hyder-Khan, was the same night placed peaceably on the musnud by the British Resident.

Saadut-Ali, the deceased Nuwuab, was in stature rather above the middle size, and much inclined to corpulency. His countenance was not, strictly speaking, a fine one: there was little regularity of feature; still it was prepossessing, and in the fire of his eye could easily be read a mind born to command. He had wherewithal a majesty in his deportment one would not exactly have expected from his appearance, and which well became his situation.

On the deposition and subsequent confinement of his brother's adopted son, Vizier Ali, Saadut-Ali was drawn from comparative obscurity, in which he for some years had been residing, and was advanced by the British government as legal heir to the throne

throne of Lucknow. His administration has been greatly, and perhaps in some degree not undeservedly, censured : although to represent the whole province of Oude as become a desert through his tyranny, and the country wholly depopulated by his injustice and rapacity, as I have heard many otherwise well-informed persons assert, is surely to allow the influence of prejudice, and to submit one's judgment to the most fallacious of guides. I have travelled through the greater part of Oude, and, with no inclination to represent it a paradise, have certainly as little to characterize it a wilderness ; the truth, as usual, lies in the middle.

To the eastward, where the Mynporee district approaches Oude, and the Nuwuab's government commences, I must certainly admit an air of sterility is visible, which, when united with its depopulated state, would speak forcibly as to the truth of the Nuwuab's oppression, were it not considered
with

with reference to other causes ; for no part of the whole province produces a richer soil, is more abundant in richer groves, or presents a finer field for the pursuits of husbandry. But the practice which exists under all the native governments, of increasing their annual rents according to the abundance of the harvest, is in itself a bar to every improvement, and offers to the Ryot no inducement whatever for exertion ; well aware, that should he increase the value of the lands to double the sum for which they were granted him, no advantage whatever would accrue to himself from his exertions, but his rents would increase in a direct ratio to his ability of paying them.

But where, as, for instance, under the British government, a lease of ten or twenty years : secures to the Zemindar the annual payment of only a certain sum, and which varies not according to the caprice of the

sea-

season, * the holder of such lease has every inducement held out to him for increasing its value, as all accruing to him above the sum specified for rent, becomes the meed of his industry. Not that I would aver these rigorous measures to be the sole cause of that desert appearance prevailing in the part of Oude I have just spoken of, because it is natural to be supposed that they would affect all parts of the province in a similar way; and that they do not so, the most satisfactory proofs exist, not only immediately around the capital, but from thence to where the province of Oude touches the Jionpoor district, a distance of no less than
eighty

* Under the native governments, it is common for the Zemindars, or landholders, to visit the crops of their tenants, the Ryots or tillers of the soil, and raise their rent according to their abundance: but as there is one standard price for the hire of lands, this is restricted entirely to the interest of the Zemindars; and should any unforeseen calamity lessen the crops of the Ryot, no allowance whatever is made for the deficiency.

eighty or one hundred miles, throughout which cultivation is not only very luxuriant, but many parts rival, if not surpass the most flourishing of the Company's districts. It would therefore appear, that only the remote parts of Oude are visited by oppression, or that at least on the confines alone it is conspicuous.

Whether the Aumils, or native collectors, at a distance from the seat of government, may not have exceeded their orders, and compelled the miserable inhabitants to flee for protection nearer the throne, is a question which requires to be elucidated, before we load the prince with perhaps unmerited odium. More enlightened governments may furnish numerous instances of princes being the tools of ministers; the latter the sport of their officers; and the wretched people, between both, being equally abused and despised. Such, for ought I know,

know, may be the present state of the government of Oude.

A few years since, there existed in Lucknow, in the person of a Musselman Faquir, an extraordinary instance of voracious appetite, remarkably evincing how near, when unrestrained by civilization, the human appetite approaches to that of the brute. The man of whom I speak was a resident in the capital of Oude, and it was his peculiar custom, by a display of his edacious powers, to solicit at the expense of strangers the gratification of his appetite.

From a particular friend* of mine he requested, and obtained a fine sheep. Seizing its two fore legs, he drew the animal, suspended in the air towards him, threw back its legs with all his strength, and

* Claude Russel, Esq. one of the present judges of the court of appeal and circuit for the division of Benares. Some of the descendants of this cannibal are still to be seen at Lucknow.

and laid the creature both dead and open in an instant. His first care, on the sheep being thus exposed, was to cast away the entrails, and drink the blood. To do this more effectually, he always buried his head in the animal's body, and which custom, if it preserved any of the blood from being spilt, rendered his appearance horrible and disgusting, by coagulating and matting his hair. He then with his hands and teeth (never employing a knife) tore off the skin, with the same instruments tore and devoured the flesh, and having nicely picked every bone, loudly petitioned for a second sheep. The disgust excited was however too great to admit of a second performance, and the cannibal regretted that he had not received wherewithal to satisfy the importunate cravings of his maw.

Asoph-ud-Dowlah, the predecessor of Saadut-Ali, and uncle to the present Nuwuab of Oude, bestowed a jagheer, of

the annual value of three thousand rupees, on this singular character. It was on a day of great festivity in Lucknow, when, after devouring three sheep successively, and losing three teeth in the encounter, that he was blessed with this munificence of his prince, as a reward for his prowess in the *qrs edendi*. A squalid, emaciated appearance was the characteristic of this Faquir; and with his diseased appetite we may naturally infer, that the quantity of food proved an obstacle to its nourishing him.

At Lucknow are to be found the best artisans and mechanics of every kind, men little inferior in skill to our best workmen at home. They receive every encouragement from the Nuwuabs, who employ often and pay handsomely. But as to any exclusive manufacture for which the city is famous, affording a mine of wealth within itself, similar to Benares and other places,

as

as I could hear of none, so I imagine it is not possessed of any.

The disposition of the natives of Oude is generally deemed unfriendly to us : in reality, I fancy not more so than those of our own territory ; though these last, being more immediately under our controul, are restrained by fear from evincing their ill will, whereas the natives of Oude, chiefly Musselmen, little restricted by their laws, and careless of giving offence, are ever ready to evince their animosity towards those, who in erecting their own government, shook that of “ the faithful ” to the ground.

CHAP. X.

Prevalence of Concubinage.—Half-Castes.—Hindoostanee Women.—Difficulty of forming a desirable Marriage.—Zenanas.—Expenses attending them.—Necessary Evils.

CONCUBINAGE is so generally practised in India by Europeans, and at the same time so tacitly sanctioned by married families, who scruple not to visit at the house of a bachelor that retains a native mistress (though were she an European they would avoid it as polluted), * that when, setting aside the married men, I calculate three parts of those who remain as retaining concubines, I fancy I shall be only confining myself within the strictest bounds of truth and moderation. Did I again venture to
hint

* This fastidiousness is really absurd; and yet, if it is the mere colour which occasions it, one would think their own would be preferred.

hint that, on an average, half of these are fathers of two children, it would be far from an exaggeration, and a tolerably just idea may then be formed of the vast and increasing number of *demi-bengalees*, as the offspring of such connections are ludicrously termed, and of the danger which threatens from this intermediate tribe.

Characterized by all the vices and gross prejudices of the natives,* but devoid of their pusillanimity; by all the faults and failings of the European character, without its candour, sincerity or probity: a heterogeneous set; some by Hindoo, others by Mahometan and Malay mothers, as wills the caprice of the father; what is not in time to be apprehended from the union of so large and discontented a body? Why may we not expect the scenes of South-

M 3

America

* Though born in the country, the distinction is generally so expressed.

America to be displayed in India? A body who have neither riches, honour, nor any advantage to sacrifice, must ever pant for a revolution. It is a theatre from which they have every thing to hope, and from which, if unsuccessful, they can but return to their original insignificance.

The climate is undoubtedly one of the chief causes of this great propensity to sexual intercourse, the results of which prove generally so unfortunate to my countrymen. That fever of the blood, which to the frigid sons of Europe is known only by name, flows with irresistible impetuosity in the veins of Anglo-Asiatics; but more especially in those of young men, who on first entering the country are usually rioting in health and of elastic spirits. It is at this period, when "the heart dances to the song of hope," that attachments are formed, which in a few short years entail children, debt and ruin, on the infatuated youth.

The

The Hindoostanee women, (under this denomination I class both Hindoos and Moslems) are in general exquisitely formed, after the truest models of symmetry and beauty.* Their countenances, more pleasing than handsome, are very expressive; their large black eyes in particular, full of the softest fire, convey volumes, and almost supercede the necessity of speech. They take much pride in their hair, which is usually very long and glossy, and tied simply in a knot at the back of the head.

M 4

The

* I am well aware that this portrait will be decried, as existing only in my imagination; but it is not to those whose travels have not exceeded the precincts of Calcutta that I address myself; all who have visited Rohileund, and the more Northern parts of the Dooab, will, I am confident, agree with me. Moreover, out of the thousands who enter India, a very considerable majority quit it without ever seeing any women superior to the wives or mistresses of their servants. It is only in the decay of families of reputation, such as are every where conspicuous in the Dooab, that the real fawn-eyed beauties of the East are submitted to the rude gaze of an European.

the delicacy and nice proportions of their limbs must be seen to be admired; their finely-shaped necks, small, and tapering waists, well-turned ancles and infantine feet, form a clustre of delights, to the temptation of which it is not surprizing if we see men, in other respects prudent, fall the victims. Moreover, when once entangled, the native girls are so alluring in their manners, are ever so solicitous to preserve your affections, and gain, in a short time, so wonderful an ascendancy over the most determined, that a separation becomes impossible, and every such attempt, similar to those of the poor limed bird, but knits secure the fetters by which one is enthralled.

Another circumstance, which will serve greatly to account for the prevalency of concubinage, is the difficulty of forming a desirable marriage, and the heavy expenses attendant on the matrimonial state in
India,

India. The generality of ladies who come annually from Europe, though doubtless of unsullied virtue, are by no means such as a person, at all scrupulous in the connexions he formed, would select from, for a partner for life.

This remark is more peculiarly applicable to those who, without having friends in the country, venture out on what, in India, is aptly enough termed speculation. To such misfortune I partly attribute so wide extended an evil. Our affections must be engrossed by some object, nor can it be surprizing if, in seeing his own countrywomen so sparingly gifted with attractions, a young man should prefer a temporary attachment, to uniting himself in the indissoluble knot of Hymen.

All who retain mistresses have zenanas or female apartments for them in their houses. They generally consist of two or three rooms, with a walled court, in India called

called a *compound*, attached. Of the expences attending such appendages it is difficult to form any precise calculation, subservient, as of course they must be, to the circumstances and situation of the retainer; but commonly, I may say, they are trifling.

The Indian female dress is inelegant and unbecoming; that of a Moosulmanee or Mahometan, is as follows: loose silken trowsers (*pacejamas*) tied at the waist by a gold or silver cord (*hijarbund*), a muslin skreen for the breast (*ungur*), above which is a kind of shirt falling to the waist, denominated a *courtee*, and over all is worn the *sheet* (*doputter*), covering the back of the head, and wound simply round the body. The Hindoo differs from this only in the point of trowsers, for which she substitutes a kind of petticoat.*

Amorous

* Some of the higher classes, however, never adopt this distinction, while Mahometans are frequently attired in them;

Amorous in the extreme, possessed of nice sensibility increased by the climate, and passionately devoted to a luxurious and idle life, the generality of Indians find too many resources in their zenanas to exchange them voluntarily for the cares of cutcherry,* or the tumults of camp.

them ; they are consequently, in some degree, peculiar to both. But among the Seiks (a Hindoo people situate in the Punjab, or Country of Five Rivers, so called from the branches of the Indus), these petticoats are the common attire of the men, and are not unbecoming.

* Court of justice.

CHAP. XI. ‘

Of Tiger, Lion, and Hog-hunting, with Shooting in general, in India.

My chief subject of regret, on leaving India, arose from the recollection that it would no longer be in my power to enjoy so noble and manly an amusement as tiger-hunting. To participate in this glorious sport with any pleasure to yourself, it is absolutely requisite to be provided with three or four good double-barrelled guns, and a couple of staunch elephants ; ever keeping in mind, that the more of the latter you take into the field, a greater probability there is of your enjoying sport.

Tigers, although commonly found in high grass, are to be met with in plantations of sugar-canes, morasses, and indeed not unfrequently

frequently on open plains. From the middle of March to the end of June is the hunting season; when, all the lesser streams being dry, the tigers are compelled to resort to the large rivers for water, and should the grass near these be tolerably high, they most frequently make their dens it.

The common mode, on arriving at any likely ground, is to range as many elephants as may be, in exact order, and as you beat along, to be very tenacious of firing at other game that may appear, as should a tiger hear the report, his cowardice will immediately prompt him to change his ground. This in India, where deer, hares, partridges, and all kinds of game are stirring in multitudes around, is, I grant, a most difficult piece of self-denial: but, at the same time, so absolutely essential is it to be conformed to, that should there be one of the party more ignorant or obstinate than the rest, who continues firing at every thing he sees,
the

the only way is to repair home immediately, and no longer subject yourself to the dangers of a fever for his amusement. But this is so generally understood, that no one ambitious of the character of a sportsman is ever guilty of such irregularity.

Tigers lie extremely close, and frequently the intimation you receive of one being near, is from your elephant, whose fine sense of smell soon discovers him. But should the animal prove unstaunch, as too many of them do, all idea of sport vanishes in an instant. I have known one of these creatures infect a field of four or five others with its fears, who have turned round, and in spite of the *mohout* (or guide), have ran several miles before they could be stopped; these, too, were elephants that had ever been reputed capital hunters.

I myself experienced a very narrow escape from one of them, being compelled to crouch down in the *houdah*, while the
boughs

boughs of a tree carried off part of its back. Indeed such elephants are not only useless to a sportsman, but extremely dangerous, as, should the country in which they run be at all wooded, there is no answering for the consequences.

Of the enthusiasm which pervades every breast at the sight of a tiger, as rushing from his den, with a kind of bark,* he makes towards the elephant, language is insufficient to convey even an idea. Hope, expectation, and delight, are at their acme ; and, as each succeeding moment gives the ascendancy to one or other of these emotions, suspense becomes doubly interesting.

With

* Those who talk of a tiger's roar, have never seen one in a wild, and, I may add, savage state ; for, by confinement, they lose much of their native ferocity. The noise made by a tiger when roused resembles more the bark of a dog than anything else I know : and although, when wounded, their cries are louder, they still bear little affinity to the roar.

With eyes glaring fire, lashing his tail, and mad with pain, the infuriated beast springs on the head of the elephant.* Shaken hence by the efforts of the lacerated animal, he probably, by a second spring, regains his situation; but death is now inevitable: ere this, bleeding at every part, he either drops through weakness, or a finishing ball decides his fate.

As soon as dead it is a general custom to measure and skin him. The natives, who entertain a great idea of the virtues of the fat, in cases of weakness, impotency,† &c. eagerly apportion to themselves this part of the spoil. They likewise cut off the animal's mustachios, as possessing talismanic powers, and securing them from witchcraft.

The

* Sometimes these creatures are attacked in front, and at others in flank.

† After being well anointed with this fat, the poor wretch is considered a second Hercules.

The largest tiger I ever heard of was killed at Keree, a small village, distant about eighteen miles from Sahranpoor. Its dimensions were;—height, from the shoulder to the ground, fourteen hands two inches; length, from head to tail, twelve feet. It fought desperately, and was shot by some officers of the 5th regiment Bengal Native Cavalry. In general, these animals are by no means so large; three feet and a half, or four feet, being the common size, with a proportionate length of body: they are to be met with in all parts of India. Those of the upper provinces are esteemed most ferocious, and to afford the best sport; but even of these, not two in ten charge, or make the least effort for their lives, but are shot on the ground as so many dogs. Their smell when dead is very offensive.

As a sportsman, I have given the tiger precedence of the lion, which, in India, is inferior to the former in courage and fero-

city. Lions are met with only in the most northern parts ; in the Hurreanu district, and more especially round Kurnowl : indeed, till lately, it was doubted whether they were to be found at all in Hindostan : daily experience, however, has now made the sport in those parts as common as tiger hunting.

The king of beasts degenerates sadly in Asia, is the most cowardly of all cowardly animals, and his killing affords no amusement ; he is shot, as tigers, from the backs of elephants. A laughable circumstance afforded me an opportunity of seeing the only one I ever beheld : it was as follows. I was proceeding, with a party, to within a short distance of Kurnowl, tiger hunting, and, as is the custom in India, we sent on our elephants, camels, tents, servants, &c. the preceding night. The road lay through a thick jungle, which the advanced elephant had scarce entered ere he
stopped,

stopped, and by no inducement could be brought to proceed. It being a fine moon-light night, a large animal was distinctly seen, standing in the middle of the road, and which evidently caused the obstruction. The servants having in vain attempted by shouts to drive it away, it was proposed to the guard, a few of Begum-Sumroo's Sipahs, to fire; but these gentlemen, covering timidity under a principle of duty, declared themselves not authorised to expend her highness's ammunition without orders. Such was the situation of the cavalcade, when a bearer, who was carrying his master's guns, proposed, if any of the party knew how to load it, to discharge one of them; another, who from having accompanied his master in his shooting excursions, affirmed himself well acquainted with the whole art, readily assented. They unfortunately hit on a new and valuable *Manton*. The gentleman who was

to load commenced his operations, and having emptied half the contents of the powder-flask, a third of the shot-bag, and put three large balls into the gun, handed it to his comrade to fire. The latter no sooner pulled the trigger, than, as may be expected, the barrel flew one way, the locks a second, and the stock a third: the object was however effected, for the animal disappeared. The bearer, who justly dreaded the anger of his master, instantly decamped ; and the next morning, on the servants' returning to search for the fragments, they discovered the animal, which proved to be a large lion, extended under a tree, quite dead. Its colour was not unlike that of a camel. It had a long flowing mane, and long tail, ending in a black knob : its height did not exceed four feet, the common size of tigers.

No hunting is pursued with more avidity, by those partial to field sports, than that
of

of the hog. A staunch horse, good horsemanship, and well-tempered spears, are here indispensable: as the generality of them are slain, much dexterity is not required.

Hogs, found chiefly in Bengal, are particularly numerous in the Cossimbazar island. They frequent the long grass, and when roused commonly make towards any jungle that may be near. Should they succeed in reaching wood cover, the sport is over; if not, and much pressed, squatting on their haunches, they usually face their pursuers. Each hunter, on coming up, jobs his spear into the animal, and rides on. Jobbing signifies the protruding your spear, by main force, into some part of the hog's body, and is much inferior, in address, to throwing it from a short distance.

If the animal is courageous, he sometimes anticipates the hunter, springs for-

ward, and, where skill is wanting, rips open the horse instantaneously with its tusks. The chances are that on coming to the ground the rider shares a similar fate. Such instances however, though on record, are not frequent. I have been told, by some who have tasted it, that the flesh of the wild hog is very fine, and preferable to those domesticated: it is not generally eaten, but as many as are killed, their heads being cut off as trophies, are suffered to manure the ground on which they fall.

Were it not that jackals swarm to so great a degree as to render it almost impossible to confine the pack* to any particular scent, hunting them with fox-hounds would afford great amusement. Foxes are small, of no bottom, and, though possessing speed,

* There are a few packs in the country; one, I believe, in Calcutta, and another at Meerut.

speed, are in little esteem ; but jackals run both long and well, fight boldly to the last, and not unfrequently revenge their own deaths in the destruction of some of the dogs.

I know nothing more truly awful than the cry of these animals at night. During the day, they remain in holds, but at dusk come forth in thousands, and rend the air with their shrieks. It is said when near tigers * their yells resemble the moans of a dying person. I can myself assert, that at Keree, where these animals abound, I have heard this hollow kind of noise, which had in it something peculiarly solemn and affecting : but whether proceeding from the cause assigned, or what is perhaps as

N 4 probable,

* However partial the jackal may be to the lion, he takes good care of our friends the Johnnies (a cant word for tigers). The absurd idea is now however nearly exploded.

probable, from a stray jackal, I cannot determine.

Shooting in India, from the quantity of game, is perhaps equalled by no country in the world; though I should imagine surpassed almost by all with respect to quality.

The florican is a very fine bird, and indisputably the only one in the country which possesses any tolerable game-flavour: these are found in pretty high grass, but more frequently in fields of mustard, when the plant is in flower. Extremely timid, the great difficulty is to approach within shot of them; for the rest, their size, about as large as a young turkey, their slowness in rising, and heavy flight, generally secure them to the most indifferent shot. The male is remarkably handsome: his wings are black and white, with a plumage not very unlike a pheasant's: the female is brown.

Partridges

Partridges are of two kinds, grey and black; the former is the common English bird, and so indifferent and tasteless in India as to be never eaten. Many think the black a fine bird: its plumage is beautiful; but in point of insipidity, I never considered its flesh a whit inferior to the grey.

Quails and ortolans, in the hot season, are delicious; at no other season are they eatable. The former require a quick eye, and afford sport to the best shots: for the latter, with No. 10, six, or eight dozen may be killed at a single discharge. Hares abound, but are dry, and wholly devoid of flavour; I never tasted one that was not much inferior to the common English rabbit. Deer too are of all kinds, hog, spotted, and antelopes, together with the Baruh-Singah, or large twelve-antlered, species. I have seen one of these antlers picked up, in the Dehra-Doon, which no one man could grasp. But for venison,
such

such as in England is known by that name, we have none ; * the flesh of all Indian deer being commonly poor, unjuicy, and wanting flavour.

Every species of wild fowl is abundant—ducks, geese, teal, widgeon, snipes, &c. are, in the cold season, to be met with in myriads on every *geel* (or lake). In general they are fine shooting, and excellent eating. I am positive that on one geel I have often seen not less than six or eight thousand: when roused they literally darkened the air.

* This, of course, does not apply to deer retained in a domestic state, and fattened for the table ; but merely to such as every sportsman may kill, and dine on, while out. Not that, at such times, it is generally eaten, but more commonly falls to the lot of the servants ; the lowest castes of which regale plentifully on whatever game the nice palate of their master may induce him to reject. Even the more scrupulous Hindoos, should any life be remaining, will eagerly cut its throat, and partake of the general feast.

CHAP. XII.

Hindoo Marriages.—Of the Musselman Principle of Predestination—and the Hindoo Belief in the Metempsychosis—Avarice of the Hindoos—Their Treatment of the Dead.—The Rivers in India disagreeable.—Barbarous Customs of the Hindoos.

At the early age of three or four, the Hindoo children are betrothed to one another, and the ceremony is accompanied with rejoicings, and a display of all the wealth of both parties. At fourteen, and often much earlier, the parties, who until this time have been perfect strangers to each other, are brought together, and after passing through the principal streets of the city or town in which they reside, preceded and followed by musicians, the bride is escorted to the house of the bridegroom, where rejoicings and festivity most commonly

monly prevail for a week or fortnight after.

Secluded in the solitary retirement of the harem, the Hindoo women, considering it derogatory either to read or write, to work, and more especially to spin,* pass their lives in trivial amusements with their slaves, and in submitting to the caprice of a man, whose ideas have taught him to consider women but as instruments of pleasure. With the Mahometan, however great the number of concubines retained, and although the sons and daughters of concubinage are, by the Musselman law, deemed equally legitimate with those born in wedlock, the wife is always respected, and beheld with feelings of love and veneration, differing widely from those which the beauty of a concubine may casually inspire. She
reigns

* The spinning-wheel in a house is the surest indication of its poverty.

reigns supreme in the harem—her will is law—and the many votaries of pleasure which polygamy authorizes, but which are much oftener retained for purposes of state than sensuality, are effectually awed, and compelled to reverence her who fills a situation every way more suitable to the laws of reason and religion.

It is an erroneous idea that the Mahometan does not recognise the possession of souls in women, and that consequently, they must be incapable of participating in the joys of paradise with men. Mahomet only denotes them to be of a nature more fickle, capricious, and inconstant than men: and though, indeed he assigns them an elysium, it is a state of bliss adapted to their sense of enjoyment, and much inferior to that awarded the believers who are of the sex of Ali!

The Musselman principle of predestination, and the Hindoo belief in the Pythagorean

rean doctrine of the metempsychosis, more clearly develop themselves in the hour of death than at any other period. The former, animated by the hope of sharing in the refined pleasures of sensuality their prophet has painted in such alluring and captivating colours ; black-eyed Houris, pellucid streams and shady bowers ; images so congenial with the ardent passions and desires of a tropical clime, rushes to battle in the firm persuasion, that as Ulla is God, and Mahomet his prophet, so to perish in fight is the most honourable of all deaths ; and whether, at the destined hour, arrested by the sword of the enemy, or by disease, that nought can withstand the irrevocable fiat of Omnipotence. How well adapted is such a belief to conquest ; and who does not admire the dexterity and ability of Mahomet, when, in borrowing the chief materials of his structure from the law of Moses, he succeeded in raising them
on

on so solid a foundation as the sensual appetites and desires of his followers ?

It was the policy of Mahomet to adapt his system of future rewards and punishments to the clime which gave him birth ; and in decking his paradise with the gratifications and pleasures inseparable from and almost peculiar to the torrid zone, he failed not to doom the coward, or the slow in conversion, to realms sandy and scorched by the rays of a vertical and never declining sun. There, parched by heat, the thirsty wretch seeks in vain the refreshing stream, or the assuaging grass.* Deprived of every friend, he wanders, the Chandelah, or outcast of eternity, and a millenium of such a state is considered but as the feeble atonement of cowardice.†

The

* The natives of India, when incapable of procuring water, often pluck the grass, and suck it, and thus assuage their thirst.

† See Salee's Koran and Preliminary Discourse.

The Hindoo, again, is actuated by widely different notions ; and, whether he be of the Brimha, Khetrie (or Chatrya), Vyee, or Soodar caste, self-interest holds predominant sway in his bosom. It is the thirst of lucre which prompts those of the highest caste, Brahmins, to perform the menial offices of your household ; and, in the accumulation of riches, to despise alike the doctrine of the Jogue,* the laws of Menu, and the polytheism consecrated by superstition.

The usurious Hindoo, when contrasted with the Moslem, who is forbade to lend on interest, is seen in an unamiable light ; but we must recollect that the Shroffs, or bankers, of which this class is composed, are represented by Menu as descended from the *belly*, and in consequence sullied by its grosser appetites ; and though we see
many

* See Preface to Dowe's Hindostan.

many other castes who trench on this privilege, still it is allowed, that if a Hindoo is unable to gain a subsistence in one profession, he may lawfully adopt another.—
(*Menu, chap. x.*)

In the Hindoo one aptly discerns the ruling passion strong in death. In his last agonies, his thoughts directed, not to the supreme, but to the intermediate state into which his soul must migrate, until purged of its offences, he alternately allots a portion of his wealth to build a serai,* to plant a grove, dig a well, or excavate a pond ; hoping by these means to gain the intercession of his maker ; to avert, by gold, the punishment he merits ; or, by obtaining for
o his

* A *serai* is a house of accommodation for travellers, generally built by the road side, and numerous throughout the country. In the old Mahometan governments they were the objects of much attention, but are now very generally in decay and ruins.

his soul the sacred repository of the cow,* to preserve it from migrating into the ignominious jackal.

The Hindoos invariably burn their dead ; a custom admirably adapted to their climate, and which it is to be lamented that their poverty or indifference should ever cause to be neglected. The higher classes, it is true, reduce the bodies of their relations to ashes, considering it disgraceful to consign them to the sacred Ganges, or the Jumna, in any other manner ; but the middling and poorer classes, after merely singing the corpse over a few sticks, deliver it, as chance may direct, to the Ganges or Jumna, the Bagharati or Brimputra. Thus, every hour, passed on the rivers in India, presents sights
shocking

* The cow, as more peculiarly sacred in the eyes of a Hindoo, is deemed the most enviable channel of transmigration : in the same way, the jackal is thought fit only for the lowest and most despicable of the populace.

shocking to humanity, and sickening to the most apathetic. Crows and vultures are seen daily floating on half-eaten bodies, and glutting themselves with the entrails, the “shreds and remnants” of mortality.

I have, myself, near the holy city of Benares, had my boats surrounded with bodies, in every stage of decay, from those just committed to the water, to others in the most loathsome state of putrefaction. I have seen the oars of the boatmen strike against the mangled carcasses, and in the act of my servants drawing water to drink, have often cautioned them against the floating fragments of a human body. In extenuation of this disgraceful custom, the natives urge their poverty; and I have not unfrequently had the happiness of contributing, by a rupee’s worth of wood, to the decent treatment of a parent, a sister or brother, by reducing the corpse to the ashes and dust from whence it sprung.

But the singularly barbarous custom of carrying the aged and infirm to the banks of rivers, and there gorging them with mud, until life becomes extinct, and which, defending on a principle of humanity, the Hindoos practise towards their nearest relatives and most intimate friends, evinces them to be little susceptible of the ties of nature ; and if, as has been well authenticated, such barbarity is frequently resorted to by children impatient of parental authority, we can be little surprized that they should be so indifferent as to the decent treatment of the bodies after death.

CHAP. XIII.

Approach to Calcutta.—Fort William.—Government-House.—Course.—Society.—Theatre.—Assembly-Rooms.—Supreme Court—Asiatic Museum.—Town-Hall.—Auctions.—Nautches or Dances—College of Fort William.

“ SETTING aside the pleasure one naturally feels at the termination of a long voyage, and on arriving at the ultimate point of destination, the stranger will have little to admire till his arrival at Fultah. From the entrance of the Hooghly to the latter place, none of those objects which usually indicate the proximity of a flourishing metropolis are to be found. No public edifices, no gay villas, no crowded wharfs are to be seen. The shores on either side are inhospitable and dreary; and, excepting a few insignificant miserable villages, not a

“ house is to be seen. At Fultah, how-
“ ever, a few hours may be very agreeably
“ spent at a tavern kept by Messrs. Hig-
“ ginson and Baldwin, where the passenger
“ will meet with good accommodation, and
“ be able to recruit his spirits after his
“ fatiguing trip.

“ The near approach to Calcutta, how-
“ ever, amply compensates for past disap-
“ pointment, and he whose eye has been
“ hitherto fatigued with gazing on unculti-
“ vated and barren shores, is equally sur-
“ prised and delighted at the luxuriance of
“ the scene, as he approaches this famed
“ city. Gardens tastefully laid out, and
“ houses more resembling the palaces of
“ princes, than the abodes of private gentle-
“ men certainly contribute to give the stran-
“ ger a most favourable idea of the metro-
“ polis of the British empire in the East.

“ Here the windings of the river greatly
“ tend to increase the delight which the
“ appearance

“ appearance of a populous town is every-
 “ where calculated to excite, after a voyage
 “ of some months duration ; and when, by
 “ a sudden turn, the fort, the town, ship-
 “ ping, &c. burst, for the first time, on the
 “ sight of the enraptured stranger, the
 “ coup-d’œil, is magnificent beyond descrip-
 “ tion. The rapidity of the current caus-
 “ ing the boat to glide on at the rate of
 “ perhaps twelve miles an hour, the quick
 “ succession with which new objects of
 “ admiration present themselves, has the
 “ effect of realizing those tales of enchant-
 “ ment with which our early years have
 “ been amused ; and if, among this variety,
 “ the attention should be more particularly
 “ arrested by one object, it will undoubtedly
 “ be by Fort William, of which the regular
 “ architecture and commanding position
 “ are equally conspicuous.

“ This fortress completely commands the
 “ town. It is a modern work, and is de-

“ servedly considered one of the first fortresses in the world. In Europe few can be compared with it, and in the other quarters of the globe it is assuredly unequalled. It is capable of containing twenty thousand men : its defences, indeed, require ten thousand to man them completely. Provisions, equal to six months consumption, are always in store at the fort ; and supposing it possible for it to be attacked at the shortest notice, by even the most powerful enemy, it is of all stations in the world the best calculated to offer a protracted and effectual resistance.”

The above is an extract from a periodical work,* published a short time since at Calcutta. The author’s descriptions are at once so lively and correct, that falling accidentally into my hands, when on the point of sketching that metropolis, I thought I could

* Called “ the Vakeel.”

could not do better than preface this part of my work by their introduction.

The concourse of knaves of every description who gather around new-comers, follow them through the streets, and infest their places of residence, is, to an indifferent spectator, or to one who can foil them at their own arts, highly amusing; but to the unfortunate wight, ignorant of the language, unskilled in the ways of Bengallee Circars, * and with no friend at hand to advise or direct him, it is far otherwise. His clothes disappear first—his money goes next—he knows neither the coins of the country, nor their value—for the worth of two pounds he is lucky if he obtains one—and so on. Without a soul on whose recommendation for servants he can rely, he beholds himself the prey of sharpers of whose villainy he is well aware, though
utterly

* Or agents.

utterly at a loss how to supply their place with others in whose fidelity he has confidence. Those servants who ply at *gauts*, or landing places, are usually of the very worst description; and it is truly to be lamented, that these men, by speaking English, become so useful to the stranger, unacquainted with a single word of Hindoostanee, that all confidence is vested in them, of which, as may be supposed, they fail not to take every advantage.

One must not expect to see in Calcutta a city laid out and proportioned with the regularity usually characteristic of such places in Europe. Chouringhee, confessedly the most finished part of it, is a range of palaces at least a mile in extent, built with little or no order, some protruding, others receding; each house three and four stories high, with its noble porticos and open verandahs, beautiful in itself, although the whole forms a collection of
buildings

building objectionable, as to regularity, correctness and just proportions.

This is to be regretted. Had each individual on purchasing ground been restricted in the order and elevation of his structure, Chouringhee would have been the noblest street in the world ; and we should not, as at present, see it disfigured by a *mélange* of edifices varying in the nicest discrimination of architecture.

The government house, erected by Lord Wellesley, at an expense to the Company of one hundred thousand pounds sterling, is centrally situate, near Chouringhee, and overlooking the Esplanade, or Hygeian Walk,* on the banks of the Hooghly, the fashionable promenade of Calcutta. The river and its opposite banks compose a fine prospect. It is a magnificent, though heavy fabric ; but as the palace of the Governor
General

* So called by Sir W. Jones.

General of India, is well adapted to the country and its climate.

The Course is the only drive for carriages. Here, in the cool of the evening, all the *beau monde* of Calcutta may daily be seen taking the air ; and the variety of equipages, dresses, and complexions, from the elegant chariot or landaulet down to the covered cart of the native, from the blooming belle just arrived to the tawny skin of the Indian, present to the stranger a spectacle singularly unique.

All that has been said, or written, concerning the hospitality and kindness of the residents of Calcutta, falls far, indeed very far, short of the reality. A stranger no sooner arrives, properly introduced, than the house, servants, and even funds of the resident, are at his service. Every thing that may conduce to his health or amusement is in requisition ; and time, which renders novelty familiar, serves but to unfold

fold the liberal ideas and expanded mind of his entertainer.

Throughout India selfishness is unknown ; or if individually it exists, it does so with the scorn and ridicule of surrounding countrymen. Disinterestedness is pre-eminent : it is a plant which has taken root, and seems peculiarly adapted to an Eastern clime ; and if, as is said, the extremes of every virtue border on vice, we must associate profusion as its only counterpart in Bengal.

In Calcutta, no ungracious reserve the offspring of ignorance and pride, nor boisterous familiarity indicative of want of breeding or education, are to be met with ; a fascinating polish of exterior, and elegance of manner, united with the most refined and liberal notions, are characteristics of the major part of its society.

India is not the country for public amusements : nor indeed would its climate admit of such a succession of gaieties as are com-

mon

mon in more temperate latitudes ; but the few its metropolis can boast of are supported with much spirit. A small neat theatre is constructed, and the efforts of amateurs admirably supply its want of regular performers. I regretted that my short stay did not allow of my more frequently appreciating their abilities ; but, from what I saw, they all appeared above mediocrity, and many were of acknowledged dramatic excellence.

Moore's assembly rooms, open in the cold season, are well attended ; indebted, perhaps, not a little, for their popularity, to the attractions of a supper. The balls are monthly, and one hundred rupees, or about twelve pounds, is, I believe, the amount of a subscription for the season. At these assemblies the observance of etiquette is strictly enforced, and seniority of service, the general criterion of rank in India, more scrupulously insisted on than so trifling a subject

subject may seem to warrant. Splendid entertainments, on which no expense is spared, are frequent amongst individuals; and the urbanity and good humour which preside at them serve wholly to dispel any regret which the want of almost all public amusements would perhaps otherwise excite.

The supreme court of judicature is the only European court of justice in Bengal; and whither all natives, residing within the precincts of the Mahratta ditch, repair for the decision of their suits. This ditch, which formerly surrounded the whole city of Calcutta, but of which at present few traces remain, served at one time as a defence against the incursions of the people whose name it bears; when the Company, restricted to their factory, little dreamed of being one day masters of an empire.

The Asiatic Museum is worth the attention of a stranger. Though but in its infancy,

fancy, I remarked its fine collection of shells with infinite satisfaction ; and the various marine and mineral productions with which it is replete must afford information to every lover and inquirer into natural history.

The town-hall of Calcutta is a handsome building,* of the Doric order ; and, together with the marble statue of Lord Cornwallis on its basement story, reflects credit on the city. The expense attending the erection of these kind of edifices consists for the most part in the iron and ornaments it is necessary to have from Europe. The cost of these, by the time they are landed in India,

* Quarries of free-stone are very rare in India ; most of the houses are therefore built of brick, and *chunammed* over, either to imitate free-stone, or the finest marble, according to the composition of the *chunam*. The most beautiful in its appearance is made at Madras, of shells, and gives the houses of that Presidency the very look of marble.

India, is prodigious, and after all, they are not unfrequently so damaged on arrival as to be in a great degree useless.

The auctions form a desirable lounge for the busy and idle of Calcutta. Speculators and spendthrifts—those anxious for good bargains, and those desirous of no bargains at all—crowd equally to these strange receptacles of the useless or indifferent merchandize of our English markets.

To a mere spectator it would seem strange that even the daily expenses of one or two thousand catalogues could be paid by their profits, exposed, as the same articles frequently are, to the tenth or twentieth gaze of an admiring crowd. But when it is considered, that these auctions are strongly countenanced by a great majority, and that a profit of eight or nine per cent. accrues to the auctioneer on the sale of every trifling article, we shall be no

longer surprised at the vigour with which they are supported, or that some of the largest fortunes which have of late been made in India, have taken their rise, and been rapidly accumulated, from wielding the hammer.

During my residence in this city, I frequently visited the *nautches*, or dances, a favourite and almost the only amusement with the more wealthy natives. At the festival of Doorgah-Poojah they greatly prevail, and the frugal Hindoo, who barely allows himself the necessaries of life during the rest of the year, will profusely lavish his treasures in riot and festivity at this season of superstition. It will sound strange to an European, unacquainted with the customs of the East, to hear, that no respectable Asiatic ever dances, that the participating in such amusement is considered peculiarly disgraceful, and as derogatory
to

to all superior to prostitutes and buffoons—such are the dancing girls and boys of India.

At Rajah Raj Kissen's, an opulent and respectable Hindoo, the room was supported by twelve pillars of the Corinthian order, round which were entwined fine silk and wreaths of flowers ; in the middle was spread a carpet, for the European part of the company, and on each side was ranged in rows and seated on pillows, the most respectable natives. A set of nautch-girls consists sometimes of four, and sometimes less, as is the pleasure of the entertainer, attended by two or three men playing on violins, guitars, &c. Four or five sets, which relieve each other alternately, are required for the evening's entertainment. These girls, of whom the generality are far from pretty, sing Hindoostanee and Persian songs, and dance to slow and mea-

sured tunes. Their chief forte lies in attitudes, and those who have witnessed their execution in the various motions of 'Flying a kite,' and 'The bearers' dance,' must confess, with me, that the luxuriancy of their postures is but little favourable to virtue. A beautiful girl, and very superior singer, Neekhee, with the graceful dancer Ushoorun, were the attractions at my friend the Rajah's. Much as I had heard of them, they equalled, if not surpassed my expectations. The lovely Neekhee, more especially, deeply interested me. She was about fourteen years of age, and possessed a form and face moulded by the graces ; her black eyes, full and piercing, reflected the pleasurable sensations of her heart ; her mouth, around which a smile was ever playing, enclosed teeth, regular, perfect, and white as ivory ; her voice was feeble, but inexpressibly sweet ; and, although, generally speaking, I do not consider

consider the nautches of Calcutta, either for the beauty of the women or excellence of the singing, as at all comparable to those of the upper provinces, still, in this instance, I must own myself much gratified, and confess, that the twelve hundred rupees (one hundred and fifty pounds), and two pair of shawls of the same value, the price of Neekhee's attendance for three nights, was only commensurate with her singular accomplishments.

In taking leave of Calcutta, I cannot but remark that it must forcibly strike all who enter it as the metropolis of a great and flourishing empire. Its streets, spacious and elegant, thronged daily by a countless multitude. Its river swarming with every description of vessel, from the superior English and American merchantman to the Arab of the Red Sea and the uncouth proa of the Maldives.* The refined inventions of

* A cluster of islands in the Bay of Bengal.

luxury presented hourly to the sight, and the temptations which the various elegances of life, concentrated in the European and native bazars,* commonly solicit, declare it at once the dwelling of a rich and thriving community, the mart of commerce, and a head in every way worthy the grandeur and importance of our Eastern possessions.

* Daily markets.

CHAP. XIV.

*Cape of Good-Hope.—Table-Bay.—Cape-Town.—
African Club.—Theatre.—Government Gardens.—
Menagerie.—Ostriches.—Museum.—Mr. Grant.—
Table-Mountain.—Rides.—Society.—Climate.*

ON the 26th of November, 1814,
I embarked for England in the private
licensed ship *Lady Campbell*, burthen about
six hundred tons, and without any circum-
stance of interest anchored in *Table-Bay*,
on the 10th of February, 1815.

The Cape of Good Hope is almost the
extreme point of Southern Africa: it is
situated in 35° S. lat. and between 19° and
20° W. long. The Portuguese,* its dis-
coverers, led by the adventurous De Gama,

p 4

first

* It was discovered by B. Diaz, in 1486, and sailed
round by De Gama, in 1497.

first succeeded in doubling this common centre of storms and tempests, in exploring the Eastern world, and in unlocking new treasures to the philosopher and merchant; and a proud monument to their fame has been raised by the lays of Camoëns, in his charming poem of the *Lusiad*.

The most remarkable object, on entering Table-Bay, is the Table-Mountain, so called from its perfect level, and resemblance to that piece of furniture: it rises three thousand five hundred and eighty-two feet above the sea, and to ships immediately to leeward affords complete protection from the south-easterly gales, which often blow here with great impetuosity.

On the approach of one of these gales, the mountain assumes a very singular aspect: it is wholly enveloped in a mass of white clouds, which, until the gale subsides, continue rolling, with much grandeur, down the sides of the mountain. The
gradual

gradual accumulation of these clouds on the top is not inaptly termed, by the residents of Cape-Town, *laying the table-cloth*; and three or four hours is the general warning they receive of this dinner of wind.

The Lion's Head and Rump claim notice for their singularity: these mountains, connected, really form an excellent representation of the king of beasts; they are situated to the right, and at a trifling distance from Table-Mountain. The former is a barren rock, but the latter, on which is a signal-post for ships to the N. W., is covered with vegetation.

To the left of Table-Mountain is the Devil's Hill, on one of the declivities of which is likewise a signal-stand, to communicate with Simon's-Town. The batteries of Amsterdam and Chavonne, which secure the town on the side of the Bay, are
both

both fine fortifications, and deserve attention.

Cape-Town is extensive, and regularly built: its streets run at right angles, and the houses of its inhabitants wear an air of neatness and comfort. The Heer-Graht is a handsome square, enclosing the parade, a sandy spot, surrounded by fir-trees, on which the troops manœuvre. The castle stands on the right of the parade, and in front of it are barracks for a regiment of dragoons, and two of infantry.

The *trunk*, or prison, which forms an angle of the old court-house, I entered; it comprizes twelve cells, into which are occasionally crammed ninety-two black and twenty-eight white offenders: the women's apartments are separated from the men's by an iron grating.

The African Club, formed chiefly of gentlemen residing in Cape-Town, is almost
the

the only amusement, or resource. Here are reading, card, and billiard rooms; and the natural urbanity of our countrymen abroad is conspicuous in the ready introduction with which a stranger is greeted by every member of the society.

Previous to our last conquest of the colony, the Dutch had erected a theatre, but an inelegant and untasteful one. The performances, even in the winter, are very rare, and whilst I was at the Cape there were none. This building is situate in the remotest part of the town—Hottentot's square.

Two markets are well supplied with fish, flesh, and fruit. Fowl is not so abundant, and of fresh butter a deficiency at all times prevails: vegetables, however, are in plenty; and altogether, perhaps, no place in the world is better adapted than the Cape of Good Hope to refresh ships after a long voyage.

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The hilly surface of Cape-Town, and the ascent on which most of the houses are built, renders walking fatiguing; and it is probably for this reason that the Government-gardens, an avenue of oak-trees, with myrtle-hedges, and the only promenade, are so well frequented. In their centre is a good house for the governor, but who chiefly remains at his country-seat at Newlands, five miles off; and at the top a menagerie of wild beasts, birds, &c. Of the latter, the ostriches claim attention. Some of these birds stand five or six feet, and can stretch their necks to a great height: they are mostly of a brown colour, with wings rather resembling down than feathers. Hunting them affords fine sport: they are generally descried on plains adjoining hills, and the skill consists in turning, and compelling them to take to the hills. As soon as this is effected, they are easily shot; as no bird is sooner blown on hilly ground,

ground, nor runs with such rapidity on plains, as the ostrich : indeed on the latter they are said to outstrip the fleetest horses. They are found about twelve miles from Cape-Town.

I advise the stranger to visit a museum of Mr. Villett's, situate in Long-street : it is dedicated to Linnæus, and contains specimens of every department of the natural history of Southern Africa. Those of zoology and conchology are peculiarly interesting.

In Cape-Town I met with Mr. Grant, a gentleman whose life appears to have been an uninterrupted series of vicissitudes and misfortunes. In early life, he entered the military service of the Company, and acquired the approbation of Warren Hastings : transferred to the civil line, he was, for a short time, placed in some important situations by that exalted character. When Lord Cornwallis assumed the reins
of

of government in Bengal, he was expelled, to make room for some of his lordship's partizans—infamous attacks made on his character—his integrity called in question—and this without any defence being allowed: to use his own words, he was prejudged and proscribed.

His domestic misfortunes commenced with the seduction of his wife,* by Sir Philip Francis, on the day of marriage, and terminated (if I may use the word) by his being deprived almost of bread by the British government at the Cape of Good-Hope. I found him the gentleman, and much esteemed.

The ascent of Table-Mountain, which overhangs great part of the town, though laborious, is, in reality, much less so than the indolence, or the fears, of the generality lead them to imagine: a couple of
hours

* The present Madame Talleyrand.

hours climb will carry you at any time to its summit; and to select a clear day, when the Table is wholly free from clouds, and a couple of well-acquainted guides, with some refreshment, is all that is requisite for the undertaking.

An attentive observation of the mountain previous to starting, is very essential; from a neglect of it many have lost their way in the fog, and some dreadful accidents have occurred.

But, after all, the chief gratification of such a trip must arise from the boast of having undertaken it; for the extent and variety of prospect on Table-Mountain is too considerable to afford much satisfaction. The great elevation, by diminishing objects, lessens their effect: and surely no one will assert, that the pleasure of viewing houses as mole-hills, ships as specks, and trees as shrubs, can at all equal that of a nearer and less exalted survey.

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The many shells observable on and about the mountain, may add some weight to what was suggested to me of its having been formerly a volcano. The bituminous nature of the soil around, not unlike that of Etna and Vesuvius, may serve to corroborate this, and, were it worth the trouble, doubtless some curious speculations might be elicited on the subject.

The ride round the Kloof is the only one near Cape-Town which can be characterized as pretty. From Green-Point, it may extend, in circumference, about six miles, over a path cut with great labour out of the sides of the mountain. During the greater part of the ride the sea is beneath you, at the distance of one or two hundred feet; and should a north-wester be blowing, its appearance, at all times fine, is greatly heightened by the waves dashing against the rocks.

The

The view towards the sea is boundless ; and the whole ride one's senses are regaled with exquisite perfumes, arising from the variety of heaths and geraniums which cover the mountain. The descent likewise affords a fine prospect of Cape-Town, its shipping, and bay. Table-Mountain adds singularity to the picture, and the coolness of the breezes renders this ride, most commonly, a paradise of climates.

Sociability is little known in Southern Africa. The manners and customs of the English assimilate in no respect with those of the Colonial Dutch ; and although the latter are gradually conforming to our modes, it will still require a long time before their rust and reserve, which at present annihilate every idea of general intercourse, shall be insensibly worn away. As may therefore be supposed, except in the boarding-houses kept by the latter, in
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which it is common for all strangers to reside, the two nations rarely meet.

Generally speaking, the Colonial Dutch are so extremely poor, that they are happy to resort to any means, however disreputable, to enlarge their gratifications; and little refinement can be expected from a people, some of the most distinguished members of which are content to enjoy affluence *from the prostitution of their slaves*. It is probably this total indifference to what constitutes delicacy in other countries (a marked characteristic of the Dutch at the Cape of Good-Hope), that has in so great a degree alienated the English from their society. One can smile at or excuse their uncouth manners and barbaric prejudices, inseparably connected with narrow and uncultivated minds; but some more weighty apology must defend imposition, or its practisers will be stigmatized as unworthy

thy of intercourse. The features of this portrait may be indistinct at Amsterdam, though at Cape-Town and its environs its resemblance will be acknowledged.

The climate of Cape-Town, though reputed mild and pleasant in winter, was intensely hot during my residence in it ; and I can with truth aver, that few nights have been more oppressive to me in Bengal, than many of those I passed at the Cape. February, March, and April, are however, I am told, the most disagreeable months in the year ; and as in these was comprized the whole of my stay, I must be cautious of forming any unfavourable idea of the climate—extolled as it is, too, by the generality. But the south-easters, which daily desolate* the streets in February, brought

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forcibly

* At these times not a soul is to be seen : the houses are blockaded by ramparts of sand, and even the Hottentot is hid in his sheep-skin.

forcibly to my mind Addison's description of the deserts :

—Sudden the impetuous hurricane descends,
Wheels through the air, in circling eddies plays,
Tears up the sands, and sweeps whole plains away ;

while March and April, with the intolerable heat retained by Table-Mountain, convinced me there was some justice in the remark, that the qualities of an oven, a pair of bellows, and a waterspout, form, in rapid transition, the climate of Cape-Town.

CHAP. XV.

*Constantia — Vineyards of Mr. Cloete. — Stellenbosh. —
Hottentots'-Holland. — South Africa deficient in Wood.
— Travelling. — Dutch Boors. — Bauvian's Kloof. —
Hottentots — their Language — skill as Mechanics —
Women.*

THE vineyards of Mr. Cloete at Constantia, famed for the delicious wine so called, are invariably visited by every stranger arriving at the Cape of Good-Hope. The Great and Less Constantia, distinguished by the size of the estates, join each other, and are not more than ten miles distant from Cape-Town.

I consider the ride the most gratifying part of the whole jaunt; it winds through hedges of oak to the small village of Wynberg, and continues through an open country covered with every variety of heath.

The soil as you approach Constantia is remarkable: it is for the most part a rich loam; and is, no doubt, one of the primary causes of the superior lusciousness of the grape. The hills likewise, which shelter the vines from the north-westerly blasts, and at the same time reflect powerfully the rays of the sun, are considered greatly to assist the peculiar flavour of the wine.

To shew how partially the Constantia grape grows, I shall mention a circumstance which befel Mr. Cloete some short time back. A gentleman purchased of him a piece of ground adjoining the Constantia vineyards, and separated from them only by a hedge. Prepossessed with the idea of producing the real Constantia, he was not a little disappointed to find his wine of no superior quality to the common Cape; wishing to return the land, the case was submitted to arbitration, which of course confirmed him in the property.

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The vineyards of Constantia scarcely cover one hundred acres; and although the value of the estate is estimated annually at thirty thousand rix-dollars, I was assured that it was only when sixty leaguers of wine were made that it could be considered as at all averaging this amount; and of late years the vintage has been so unproductive, as, in the place of sixty leaguers, to have rarely allowed the manufacture of twenty. The wine has risen in consequence to an amazing price. Many persons told me they recollected, a few years since, the half aume (eighteen gallons) selling at eighty dollars; and now it is with difficulty to be obtained for two hundred.

The chief people of the Cape produce it always at their tables, in the way of Champagne; and a large quantity being annually assigned to government at a fixed price, which varies not according to the abundance or deficiency of the vintage, we can

be little surprized at its being so rarely met with unadulterated in England.

I was shown at Constantia a singular petrification: it was a pyramid of water, three yards and a half high by four feet in diameter at its base. Mr. Cloete had purchased it for three hundred dollars of a boor, who had discovered it at a spring three days journey in the interior.

The vines of the Cape, unlike those of Madeira, are not permitted to grow higher than three or four feet from the ground. This is on account of the violent south-east and north-westerly gales so common here. Their present diminutive state secures them from the gust which would lay a vineyard of espaliers on the ground. Their produce however, I understood, was not the less abundant, and their want of extent was compensated by the multitude of vines.

On Wednesday the 3d of March, 1815, I left Cape-Town for the village of Stellenbosh,

lenbosh, distant five and twenty miles, and proceeded by the way of Hottentots'-Holland to Baavian's-Kloof, or Monkey's Pass, about one hundred miles from Cape-Town.

The village of Stellenbosh is situate in a valley, and is as remarkable for its salubrity of climate as for its fineness of fruit. Its streets are regularly built, and I noticed besides that of the Landdrost or civil magistrate, many genteel and excellent houses. Mr. Wrangmore, an Englishman, keeps a good lodging-house, in which much comfort is united with economy. I recommend it as being infinitely superior to those of the Dutch.

From Stellenbosh to Hottentots'-Holland, where we breakfasted at the house of a boor, Mr. Brink, the road winds through a vale of about ten miles in extent, with the sea, Simon's-Town and Bay, to the right, and the unbroken chain of mountains to the left.

The

The village, though straggling and small, is pretty; and I observed that it derives its name from the valley, which, in the whole of its length, is called Hottentot's-Holland.

The whole of Southern Africa is deficient in wood; and a stranger, journeying through the interior, is struck with the black aspect which the entire absence of all trees occasions. The heaths, of which species no less than three hundred are known here, thrive amazingly. A variety of creepers (of which the *Gloriosa Superba* is most conspicuous), and every class of geranium, were noticed by me as abundant; but only here and there the oak, poplar, and silver-tree (this last peculiar to the colony), are observable; and if we are occasionally delighted with hedges of myrtle, twenty and thirty feet high,* we are oftener annoyed

* At the country seat of Mr. Cloete, five miles from Cape Town, there is an avenue of about a quarter of a mile in extent, in which none of the myrtles are less than thirty feet.

noyed at the quantity of brushwood covering the clay or loose sandy soil which alternately prevails.

From Hottentot's-Holland to Uriees I reckon ten miles ; but the colonial Dutch, who have no idea of calculating a journey but by the hours in which it may be accomplished, could give me no information on this head. The question, " how far is such a place ?" is answered immediately by " two, three or four hours ride ;" and the caravans of eight or ten horses, in which all travelling is performed, are invariably allowed at the rate of four miles to the hour. But though this mode of calculation may answer pretty correctly as to the roads near Cape-Town, in the interior, where they are formed out of rocks, and are steep and rugged to a great degree, and on which a horse can barely go four miles an hour, it is obvious that such reckoning must be inconclusive and unsatisfactory.

Our

Our road this day lay generally through a mountainous and little diversified country. The cottages of the Dutch boors rising at times in the midst of pleasant valleys, form however, a slight exception to this general remark. At Urices we rested ourselves and horses, and proceeded two hours ride, or ten miles further, to the house of Mr. De Cocke.

I must remark that the houses of the Dutch boors are always open to the reception of travellers; and though little, save eggs and bread and butter, is obtainable, a kind welcome and moderate charges supply the deficiency.

Our supper and its assemblage (for in Africa, guests, host, hostess and family eat together) were *unique*. We had the boor and his frow, and their three sons, the boor's daughter-in-law and his pretty daughter Clorinda, the field-cornet, my friend, and myself. They spoke not 'a
word

word of English, and we not a syllable of Dutch. Our supper, of which the severest ascetic might have partaken without fear of infringing his vows, being over, we soon after retired ; and the next morning, after drinking a cup of strong coffee without sugar or milk, continued our journey to Baavian's-Kloof.

This is one of the most remarkable spots in the colony, and to see which I rode on horseback one hundred miles. The assemblage of thirteen hundred Hottentots, civilized and educated in the principles of religion, taught each to read and write, and follow some handicraft trade, is surely, to an expanded mind, one of the most gratifying sights in the world. I rejoice at being enabled to contemplate it as such. It is now two and twenty years since three Moravian clergymen, sent by their brethren in Germany, settled at Baavian's-Kloof for the purposes of civilization.

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The Hottentots, many of whom come far beyond the frontiers of the British territories in Africa, and who reside, as savages, in the hills of Zwelldam, come annually, to the number of twenty and thirty, bringing with them their wives and children, to settle at the Kloof. Their number is rapidly increasing, and the peace and contentment they seem to enjoy may be contrasted with their external appearance. The dress of both sexes is a sheep-skin, worn with the wool outside, and either hanging from the shoulders, or tied round the body, agreeably to the temperature of the atmosphere. The women wear a kind of petticoat of the same, and the men breeches, with the wool rudely scraped off with sharp stones.

On arriving from the interior, they have each a plot of ground allotted to cultivate, and every one enjoys the fruit of his industry. Many of the houses are very neat,
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and superior to the generality of huts I have visited in India. I entered several, and was struck with the air of comfort which pervades them. They are built mostly after the fashion of the Dutch cottages, though several of those erected by the earlier comers are circular, in the manner of their own kraals.

The village of Gnadenthal, as it is called by the missionaries, runs north and south; it comprizes, besides the church and houses of the missionaries, about three hundred huts. The church is a plain neat building; its dimensions twenty-one by fourteen feet. In its centre are placed fifteen long forms; seven of which are appropriated to the females and the others to the males. It is supported by two pillars, and suspended from the roof are two glass lamps; around it runs a gallery.

Having reached the Kloof on Saturday, we next day enjoyed the pleasing sight of
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the Hottentots at church. At half-past eight in the morning those who have been baptized were summoned to prayer. Nine hundred were thus brought together, and the church was almost full. Never was I more gratified than in viewing this assemblage ! So many human beings, who, but a short time since were in the rudest state of savage nature, joining earnestly in devotion, giving with due solemnity the several responses, and chanting in chorus the hymns of the day, was a sight peculiarly interesting.

Music, as of all savages, is the delight of the Hottentots ; and the voices of their women are extremely soft and melodious. They carry their wild notes to a pitch which is astonishing ; and such is their simplicity, that they are delighted with the effects, without understanding the cause of musical harmony.

At

At ten we were again assembled to prayer, when the meeting was considerably enlarged, every Hottentot, whether baptized or not, being indiscriminately admitted.

The singing was again fine, and an extemporaneous discourse, delivered with energy by one of the missionaries, concluded the service. Of its merits I regret that my ignorance of the Dutch precluded me from judging; though, from what I could learn from a gentleman, Mr. Birchell, who acted as my interpreter, it was simple, and well adapted to the congregation. This gentleman, whom we accidentally encountered at the Kloof, was on his return from a journey of three years and eight months into the interior of Africa. In this time, he had visited the countries of the Bushmen and Namu-Quees, and passed through the whole of Caffraria, or land of the Caffrees. His waggons were filled with specimens of

the natural history and botany of these little-explored parts; their instruments of war; the skins of curious beasts (amongst many others of which I was shown that of the cameleopard); seven hundred and forty sketches of different parts of the country, and some hundred plants unnoticed by Linnæus. I have every reason, therefore, to suppose that his travels, when published, will hold a distinguished rank among those in Southern Africa.

I entered the huts of several Hottentots who spoke their original language, for, generally speaking, it is lost amongst them, and has given place to the Dutch. By striking the tongue alternately against the palate and hollow of the throat, a kind of chirp is produced, which affects the sound, and produces in the same word various significations. The extraordinary noise a large assembly must produce in conversation may be easier conceived than described.

At

At this institution, which originated in 1774, but from some cause or other did not then succeed, the Hottentots are all instructed in some trade : many I saw exceeded as carpenters and cutlers, and, on wishing to be shaved, a Hottentot VENUS performed adroitly the required operation. The women, however, are taught to read, write and spin, and I may remark, that their general proficiency reflects the highest credit on their tutors.

In the school-room, two hundred and fifty scholars were seated : they were severally brought up, and they showed us their writing on slates, and read passages in the Old and New Testaments.

CHAP. XVI.

Of the Qua-Quees, or Hottentots, with an Attempt to deduce their Origin.—Leave Baavian's Kloof.—Hot Baths of Swartenbergh.—Hottentots'-Holland Kloof.—Groen Kloof.—Expenses of the Cape.—Its Agriculture affected by the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

WHEN the Dutch took possession of this part of South Africa, their barbarity towards the natives was excessive : their lands became the property of the conquerors—their wives and children were seized as slaves—and every species of oppression was wantonly exercised.

There is still extant a story of the Qua-Quees having once resisted their invaders, and of a few Dutch being slaughtered in the encounter. The revenge of the survivors was refined, and a brass gun, presented in seeming amity, and which they were drawing

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ing away, became the instrument of death to some hundred Qua Quees. In the hope of avoiding such tyranny, most of the original inhabitants fled to the inaccessible rocks and fastnesses in the interior. These, from their vagrant mode of life, their lying in bushes, and surprizing unguarded travellers, are named Bush-men, and their country that of the Bushjasmen, or Bushmen.*

The word Hottentot, though its meaning is buried in obscurity, is evidently of Dutch application. Qua-Quee, from the name of a river, or an illustrious chief or captain, is always used in speaking of themselves as a nation or people, and the word Hottentot invariably despised. Innumerable instances may be adduced, in which all those Nomades (or wandering tribes) who, at different times,

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have

* My accounts of the Dutch cruelty are partly gathered from the work of a German missionary, lent me at the Cape of Good Hope.

have inundated Europe, have derived their names from the rank, valour, or power of their leaders; and Mr. Tooke * expressly says, that the Nogayan Tartars frequently changed their station in the vast deserts they inhabit, and as often changed their name; one while taking that of the river, or the place they stop at, at another, that of the leader who heads them.

Taking, as I do, the ancient Scythia † in its most extensive sense, from the mouth of the Oby to the Dnieper, across the Euxine to the Caspian, skirting the borders of Persia, India, and China, I will examine how far it is possible that the present Hottentots, or Qua-Quees, may be descended from the

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Nomades,

* Russia, vol. ii, page 72.

† Sir William Jones, in his comprehensive view of Scythia, has been partly my guide. See Discourse on the Tartars. As has likewise Rennell, in his admirable examination of “ the Geography of Herodotus.”

Nomades, or wandering tribes of Tartary. I shall not advert to the several nations which we all know to have originated from them, but remark, that the real Qua-Quee countenance is so truly of a Tartar cast, as to have first caused the present inquiry to revolve in my mind.

My reasons, however, for the supposition, rest not solely on the casual resemblance of features, but on the remarkable affinity observable in the present governments of the Qua-Quees, to those (as they have been handed down to us) of the ancient Tartars. Justin (lib. 2, c. 2.) describes the Scythians generally as a people living in waggons and covered with skins. These are precisely the Hottentots of South Africa, who are rarely found to remain long in huts, and whose Nomadic lives are spent chiefly in their moveable craals. The captain of the Hottentots, with some of whom I conversed at the Kloof, is, in every characteristic,
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the Jenghiz of the Tartars, the Suljek of the Turkmans. Valour only is requisite to promotion, and each captain of a tribe is distinguished but by the superiority his spear or arrow may secure to him over others.

It were superfluous to insist on the manners or customs of Nomades, in these respects not less variable than in their names and habitations: but there is, in one instance, so striking a similarity between the ancient Scythians and present Qua-Quees, that I shall not refrain from particularizing it. I allude to their being equally ignorant of written characters. This is well authenticated on behalf of the Tartars.

M. Souciet* asserts that the Oigurs alone, of all the Tartar tribes, knew the use of letters. Abulghazi indeed tells us that
Jenghiz

* In his Observations, astronomical and mathematical, quoted by Major Rennell, in his Examination of Herodotus.

Jenghiz merely employed them as excellent penmen, but the Chinese assert that he was forced to employ them, having no writers at all among his natural-born subjects.*

However, all good authorities concur in supposing the Tartars to have possessed no written memorials; and as this is obviously, even in the present day, one of the primary characteristics of the Qua-Quees, the resemblance is surely more than accidental. To the question of, How come the Scythians of the Euxine to be the Qua-Quees of South Africa? I ask, How come the Scythians from along and beyond the Jaxartes to be those of the Euxine? A thousand concurring and accidental causes have occasioned migrations to a greater extent than from the Northern to the Southern Africa; and

† See Discourse on the Tartars.

and that Nomades were known on the sea-coasts of the former, we have the testimony of Herodotus, who says expressly of North Africa (Enterpe 32), "The inhabitants of the sea-coast are Nomades."

But migrations in every age have been frequent amongst Nomades. A purer air, fresher pastures, or more abundant springs, have, at all times, been inducements sufficiently powerful to attract these Northern hives : and that the little-known continent of Africa should have at once excited their curiosity, and escaped their visits, appears to me somewhat improbable.

From the Northern to the Southern parts of Africa, difficult as may be the track to Europeans, the Tartars, from their numbers and vagrant mode of life, may have obtained easy access : nor can we, after recollecting their migration from Turkestan to the Euxine, doubt that a subsequent revolution may have propelled them across
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the Mediterranean, and from one to the other extremity of the continent.

That the Caffrees, every description of whom I met with in Africa, are the aborigines of the southern part of the continent, is decidedly my opinion : nor can I, after attentively considering the dissimilarity between these and the Qua-Quees, not merely as far as regards stature and personal appearance, but also in language and customs, relinquish the idea, that the latter, if not descendants of the wandering tribes of Scythia, are, in some way, of obscure Tartarian origin.*

On Monday the 6th of March, left Bavian's-Kloof, for the hot baths of Swartenbergh, distant twenty miles, and half a mile

* Should this notion be treated as fanciful, I can only allege, that, together with every other part of my writings, it is submitted with the utmost deference to the judgment of others.

mile from the village of Caledon. The temperature of these baths at their source is 118° of Fahrenheit. The component parts are vitriol, iron, and sulphur, and they are reckoned beneficial in complaints of the liver, and in rheumatism. Twelve rooms, almost ever engaged, are the only accommodations : and, as nothing is to be obtained there, every invalid carries with him in his waggons even the necessaries of life. After breakfasting with Dr. Hassan, to whom the baths belong, we came on to Mr. Zwart's the field-cornet, fifty miles from the Kloof, and thirty from the baths : we slept here, and the next morning proceeded to Hottentots'-Holland, where we breakfasted with Mr. Krozer, a boor.

Hottentots'-Holland Kloof, or Pass, nine miles distant, embraces from its summit a fine prospect. The valley presents itself six or seven miles in length, checquered with hamlets and picturesque villas : the sea
adds

adds its beauty to the left ; and on the right are the mountains, the Sierra Morena of South Africa. From Hottentots'-Holland to Cape Town is reckoned five hours ride, and we accomplished it by four in the evening, highly gratified with our excursion.

Groen Kloof is an institution similar to the one at Baavian's-Kloof, and though not on so extensive a scale, is worthy observation. It is about thirty-six miles distant from Cape Town. Four hundred Hottentots are the utmost here, and as they are all educated in the same mode as at the institution previously noticed, to one who has been at Gnadenthal little variety is afforded.

It is pretty generally known that the expenses of the Cape of Good Hope, with all its advantages, far exceed its revenues ; indeed, the latter are barely competent to its civil expenditure : and in an extent of country exceeding five hundred miles, comprehending

prehending a variety of climates, and considered peculiarly favoured by nature, it seems matter of surprize that the annual revenue should be restricted to the trifling sum of two or three millions of rix-dollars. A more rigid scrutiny will soon convince us that its chief cause exists in the quantity of waste, or uncultivated lands, and that this is more immediately connected with a second, from which, indeed, it may be said to originate—the price of individual labour.

Since the abolition of the slave-trade, labour in the colony has arisen to an unprecedented value. The slave sold formerly for eight hundred dollars, is now scarcely procurable for two thousand ; and the advantages of a farm must be considerable indeed, from which, at this extravagant rate of purchase, the farmer can expect to realize a moderate profit on the labour of twenty or thirty of its cultivators. So large a capital

a capital is now required for the commencement of agricultural pursuits that I was assured they were very generally neglected.

The price of labour is a clog on the agricultural body of the colony, which is not relieved by concurrent circumstances. It is neither suffered to affect the price nor property of the commodity; and thus, in lieu of the wine and corn increasing in a direct ratio to the price of labour and the expenses of the farmer, the one retains the price it did some years back, whilst the latter has been so considerably enhanced by fortuitous circumstances. But it may be urged, that in proportion to the expenses of cultivation, the value of the estate is enhanced. This however is of little import in the general estimate.

Exclusive of the holders of estates being commonly settlers for life, and indifferent as to the advantages to be gathered from their resale, I must remark that the boors

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or farmers of the Cape are not such as purchase or at all speculate in estates already thriving; their inducements were the government-lands, some of which are freely granted to all desirous of cultivating them. The rise in the value of labour, however, has superseded these; nor can it be wondered at, if the farmer should hesitate in applying for lands, the cultivation of which engrosses so considerable a capital, and of which the promised advantages barely compensate the dangers of the speculation.

The increasing value of estates, therefore, although it be a just medium of calculation in Europe, can in no way apply as a criterion of general prosperity to South-Africa, where the population is so limited, and where if few are sellers, they greatly exceed those capable, or desirous of purchasing. Were I to give my opinion of the effects produced on this colony by the abolition of
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the slave-trade, I should remark, setting aside the moral benefits accruing, which doubtless counterbalance these evils, that it has thrown it back many years, and probably for ever, in the scale of general improvement—that waste-lands extend for miles in every direction of the colony—that these, except in a few instances where the want of water operates as a bar to tillage, are solely to be attributed to the enormous price of labour—and that if the Abolition has enriched a few individuals who possessed many slaves at the period of its enactment, it has likewise retarded, if not wholly impeded, the agricultural pursuits of Southern Africa.

time, as the island is only nine miles in length, and twenty-seven in circumference, it may be visited with ease.

The governor's country-seat, and Long-Wood, that of the Lieut. Governor, are very pretty, and will repay the trouble of visiting them : but Sandy-Bay and Arno's Vale possess beauties which should unquestionably be seen by all arriving at St. Helena. A description of one is nearly that of the other :—At Sandy-Bay, the sea is seen dashing against rocks perfectly steril, which raise their peaks some thousand feet in the air. To the left, and not a quarter of a mile distant, are hills covered with the finest vegetation : while in the midst of this natural amphitheatre houses and cottages are scattered up and down. The contrast arising from the cultivated and barren parts, together with a wildness which characterizes it, renders this picture remarkably fine. As the most respectable

people take in lodgers to board at the rate of thirty shillings a-day, few think of living at a tavern, of which description of house I noticed one in James-Town. The charge may be thought exorbitant, but it in reality is not so, if the trifling produce of the island is considered. Potatoes, a few hogs, occasionally some fowls, and very rarely fresh meat, is all that is procurable, at what in England would certainly be deemed an extravagant price. But things are to be estimated by existing circumstances, and instead of murmuring at the price of every necessary, as strangers arriving at St. Helena are but too apt to do, they should be thankful that the island is so abundant as it is, and not resembling in desolation its volcanic neighbour the Ascension.

We have all read and laughed at the fact of a general council of St. Helena being summoned to consider the propriety of killing

killing a bullock;* but perhaps we have not all connected the fact with the nature and circumstances of the island.

The whole of the troops, and the greater part of its inhabitants, are subsisted entirely on salt provisions; and I met, in my tour of the island, one or two small carts laden with beef and pork, proceeding to different parts of it.

Speaking generally of St. Helena, three or four days are quite as many as can be passed in it to advantage by any visitor. 'Tis true the scenery of the interior is pretty, nay beautiful; but one soon tires of gazing continually on the same objects; and, I take it, there is more turn than truth

* The affected obscurity of people in power, is admirably burlesqued in the reply of a government-secretary of St. Helena, who to the repeated enquiries of a captain, whether he could obtain a bullock for his ship's company, gravely answered, *that the communications of government were secret, until officially promulgated.*

truth in the remark, that the island is equally famous for the beauty of its scenery and its women.

On Saturday, April 30th, left St. Helena, descried Ascension on the 6th of May, crossed the Line on the 11th, and after an absence of five years and ten weeks, landed at Lymington on the 21st of June, 1815.

THE END.

